

Delays on expansion schemes cause rising costs

# £1.5m NEEDED TO BOOST SCHOOLS

Report by Lisa O'Brien

**COUNCIL** chiefs in Walsall are being asked to approve another £1.5 million in funding to expand three primary schools to cope with extra pupils after two of the schemes hit delays.

Walsall Council chiefs previously approved almost £8m of funding to expand King Charles Primary School, in Bentley, Fibbersley Park Primary School, in Willenhall and Christ Church CE Primary School, in Leamore, to cope with dozens of extra places.

But the price of the schemes have risen following delays caused by the discovery of mine shafts, greater crested newts and tendering issues. The schemes involve extensions, alterations, remodelling or new buildings on all three school sites. It is planned to increase the number of reception places at the three from September 1. Numbers are expected to rise from 45 to 60 at King Charles, 60 to 90 at Fibbersley Park and from 30 to 45 at Christ Church.

Additional remodelling over the summer has taken place at Fibbersley Park and King Charles has made arrangements to take additional pupils by reviewing class sizes and locations.

## Discovery

But a report to Walsall Council's cabinet has revealed that the scheme at King Charles has developed to include two-year-old and extended services provision which was not included in the initial cost plan.

It has also been delayed by a number of factors including the discovery of mineshafts and shallow mine working, design issues building over mine shafts, tendering issues and the restructuring of property services.

This has involved budget costs for the project increasing to £4.38m.

The report said the scheme for Fibbersley Park had been delayed following the discovery of greater crested newts and a mineshaft in the playground, increasing costs to £3.9m.

The first phase of the project to convert the staff room and children's centre into an additional classroom was completed over the summer break and it is planned to relocate the greater newts next year.

The £1.15m scheme at Christ Church has involved the creation of an additional four classrooms. Funding for the scheme has come from the Government, schools forum and the Bentley Federation.

## COMMUNITY CHEER AS VILLAGE PUB REOPENS



New owner Paramjit Dhillon and Mayor of Walsall Angela Underhill officially reopening the Four Crosses Pub in Sheffield after a community campaign

A CENTURY old pub in Walsall has reopened after its sudden closure almost six months ago. There were fears The Four Crosses pub in Sheffield would be turned into a care home after it shut at the end of April.

But it has now reopened under the new ownership of local property developer Paramjit Dhillon. Rushall-Sheffield Councillor Richard Worrall, who campaigned to keep the pub open, was at the unveiling on Saturday alongside Walsall Mayor Angela Underhill.

Councillor Worrall said: "The people wanted their pub back and now they've got

it. When it closed I thought 'cricket that's it'. But thanks to the marvellous Mr Dhillon it has reopened. It was a bit run down but the new owner has given it a refurb. It's the same place with the same staff but just better."

He added: "It looks as if, with the pub back in business, that the ongoing decline of the historic village centre of Sheffield has been arrested, and we now need to do what we can, not only to ensure the pub survives and thrives, but that local businesses and services are supported and developed as well."

The Four Crosses is the only pub left in

Sheffield. It was boarded up without explanation six months ago. The pub was then listed as a community asset, which means if it was put on the market, a community bidder or charity could express an interest in bidding for the building.

Plans had emerged to build a care home next to, and incorporating part of, the pub off Mill Road. But after more than 100 people packed into a public meeting at St Mark's Church to support the pub, Mr Dhillon bought the site to keep it as a pub as he wanted to give something back to the local community.

## REVAMP

### Upgrade planned for pothole-hit car park

A 140-SPACE car park covered in potholes at Walsall Arboretum will be upgraded under new plans. Plans have been lodged by Walsall Council to make improvements to the arboretum extension car park, adjacent to Broadway North.

The existing car park is inadequate to meet the needs of visitors as it is in an extremely poor condition and contains large potholes.

A report reads: "To fully develop the arboretum for the benefit of local residents and as a borough wide and regional visitor destination investment in the car park is required."

## INQUEST

### Row erupts over rescue tragedy

BEACH wardens at a resort where a Walsall grandfather died trying to save two girls are 'discouraged' on entering the water in dangerous conditions, it has emerged.

Richard Guest suffered a heart attack when attempting to get the 13-year-old girls out of the water, an inquest heard. Coroner Peter Brunton criticised wardens, but Gwynedd Council said its staff are 'not qualified or properly equipped as beach lifeguards', so are not encouraged to enter the water in dangerous conditions.

The authority also stated two of its wardens did enter the water and helped save one of the girls' lives.

● Fears – Page 17

## FOOTBALL

### Match disruption is shown online

PUNCHES thrown, flares, bins chucked in the air – such were the ugly scenes that marred Sporting Khalsa's FA Cup match against FC United of Manchester.

In a video posted on YouTube, hooded louts can be seen brawling ahead of the game at Willenhall's Aspray Arena, with missiles thrown and stewards struggling to contain the violence on Saturday.

West Midlands Police spokeswoman Deb Edmonds said officers were looking at the YouTube videos.

● Proud – Page 2

## INSIDE

### CLOSE KNIT FOR POPPY APPEAL



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# Rowers hope to sail towards target



Sailors Lee Felton and Sean Lannon, with the boat

A PAIR of intrepid rowers are now launching their last fund-raising push before setting out on a gruelling trip across the Atlantic Ocean. The team needs to generate another £14,500 to reach the £85,000 total and compete in what is known as 'The World's Toughest Race'.

The Square One Atlantic team is made up of biology teacher Lee Felton, aged 30, from Dudley, and software engineer Sean Lannon, 31, from Newcastle. Over

the past 12 months the dynamic duo, along with former member, Tom Hodgson, 41 from Walsall, have been collecting donations.

They will be crossing the Atlantic Ocean from La Gomera, in the Canary Islands, to Antigua, raising awareness for charities Rape Crisis England & Wales and Sport for Freedom.

They will now set out to row the 3,000 miles across the Atlantic unaided on December 14, for 40 continuous days and nights.

Mr Felton said: "I've done a fair bit of travelling and I've been involved in some difficult and challenging projects - but this is a completely different ball game. It would be the challenge of a lifetime and also help thousands of people through the charitable work it would fund."

The team can be followed at [www.squareoneatlantic.com](http://www.squareoneatlantic.com) or via their Twitter page @squareatlantic which has details of fundraising events.

# Sporting Khalsa did us proud, say fans

**THEY did Willenhall proud - that was the resounding reaction from fans after Sporting Khalsa were knocked out of the FA Cup.**

The side lost 3-1 in Saturday's fixture against FC United of Manchester on a momentous day for the club who were three divisions below their opponents and played in front of a record crowd of 2,252 on the day.

However, the match was marred by trouble in the crowd, with a scuffle between fans and flares twice thrown on to the pitch, resulting in the match being stopped at one point.

A statement from the club said: "We're conscious of the fact that a small number of local troublemakers seemed determined to spoil the day for everyone."

"We're pretty confident these people had to look up 'Noose Lane' on the school computer during the week in order to find us."

"Let's be absolutely crystal clear, these people are nothing to do with Sporting Khalsa, they're nothing to do with non-league football and are sadly just something society has to tolerate."

## Enjoyment

"We've co-operated with our friends at the police, they're happy with the arrangements we put in place and will continue to co-operate."

"We desperately hope the actions of a few idiots didn't take any enjoyment from FC United or any of the neutrals."

Following the defeat at the Aspray Arena and despite the trouble, fans spoke of their pride of the team, who were the lowest-ranked club remaining in the Cup.

Shaun Appleby, 45, from Walsall Road, Cannock, took along his seven-year-old son Dominic. The HGV driver said: "It's disappointing. They have done brilliantly to get this far, they've done really well. It was a great turnout for the lads. It's just a shame there was a bit of trouble."

Phil Atkinson, 46, from Watling Street, Brownhills, said: "I think it is fantastic, they played really well over the 90 minutes, it's just unfortunate they didn't win."

"They've done themselves proud to get this far, it's great for the community, it's a big achievement for them."

Student Ryan Singh, 21, from Coventry,



The crowd cheer as footballer Tesfa Robinson equalises for Khalsa during the FA Cup qualifier match



A flare thrown from the crowd at Sporting Khalsa's ground during the disruption of the game

said: "They have done terrifically well to get this far, you can't fault the lads' effort."

Civil servant George Sandhu, 37, from Willenhall Road, said: "They've played well. They did themselves proud and have done Willenhall proud."

Sarb Uppal, 33, from Willow Avenue, Wednesfield, said they had put 'Willenhall on the map'. "It felt like a big achievement," added the public health worker.

Speaking after the match, manager Ian Rowe said he was 'really proud' of his team and that he hopes



Shaun Appleby, seen with son Dominic aged seven

people will continue to follow them throughout their league campaign.

The club also thanked away fans for their 'passionate' support.

A statement said: "To the visitors. A more fantastic, passionate and all-round brilliant bunch you really couldn't wish to meet, from the playing and coaching staff to the fans and committee."

"It was a superb contest, played in the right spirit."

● Match report - Page 43



Student Ryan Singh, 20, with his team scarf

# Steel crisis shockwaves feared for other firms

FEARS are growing that the shockwaves from the UK's steel crisis will spread throughout the manufacturing sector. More than 34,000 jobs at 1,700 companies across the Black Country rely on the supply of steel.

And experts point to Black Country engineering group Caparo as just the first manufacturer to be dragged down by the crisis. Oldbury-based Caparo Industries put 16 of its businesses, employing 1,700 people, into administration last Monday. While buyers are already coming forward for parts of the group, some Caparo companies may face closure with job losses potentially running into the hundreds.

Manufacturing companies are seen as increasingly at risk as the supply of UK steel is hit by the loss of production at the Redcar steel mill and the Tata sites in Scunthorpe and Scotland.

Across the UK's manufacturing heartland of the Midlands there are 12,500 companies, employing 260,000 people, that are in some way, dependent on steel, according to data from the West Midlands Economic Forum.

Paul Forrest, from the Forum, said that in the Black Country around 4,200 people were employed at companies involved in basic metals production. Another 18,300 were involved in fabrication work, 4,500 in machining and manufacturing, 5,500 in vehicle manufacturing and another 1,900 in transport.

"Not every job is at risk," said Mr Forrest. "But they could all be impacted to some extent or another."

## Quiz putting brains to test

BUSINESSES are being encouraged to get competitive and take part in a battle of the brains competition in Walsall to help raise funds for a worthwhile cause.

The business brains quiz night will be held at Walsall Rugby Club on November 19 in aid of the Well Wishers charity and its latest appeal, focusing on maternity services.

Well Wishers charity works to make a difference to the patients of Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust by focusing on fundraising appeals to help improve services both in the hospital and community.

The event will be held at 7pm and tickets are £7.50 each, including a supper of butter chicken curry or a vegetarian option. To take part, call Youla Stevens on 01922 721172.

## Rotary club set to hold open event

THE Rotary Club of Walsall will hold an open event for prospective members at 12.45pm on Friday at the Calderfields Golf Club on Aldridge Road. Eileen Mason, chair of membership and recruitment, said people can find out what club members do to benefit the community.

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## Young with no licence for TV total above 500

MORE than 500 young people across the West Midlands have been caught watching TV without a licence in the past year.

Wolverhampton had the highest number of 18 to 25-year-olds breaking the law, with 186. Walsall, meanwhile, had 114, while Dudley had 65, Kidderminster 59, Cannock 43, Stourbridge 23 and Halesowen 16.

Mark Whitehouse spokesperson for TV Licensing in the West Midlands, said: "Every year, myths circulate around campus about when you do and don't need a licence. We want to make sure students know one is needed by law to watch or record live TV, on any device including a laptop, tablet, mobile phone or games console."

"A television licence costs on average £12.13 a month. To avoid the risk of prosecution and a fine of up to £1,000, we encourage students to check if they need a licence on our website."

Recent research, which was conducted among 220 students in city centres across the United Kingdom, showed that 29 per cent think they cannot be caught watching live television on a computer, laptop or mobile device. And just over half of students believe that people in general are unlikely to be caught if they watch TV without a licence.

To find out more about getting a television licence go to the TV Licensing website at [www.tvlicensing.co.uk/studentinfo](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/studentinfo) - or by calling 0300 790 6113.

## School to let it be with hopes

A SCHOOL in Walsall has come together to fund a special Beatles inspired musical trip. The choir at St John's C of E Primary School in Brook Lane, Walsall took part in a 24 hour singathon to raise money to go to Abbey Road, where they will record their very own Christmas CD.

More than 50 children in the choir will record three Christmas songs at the recording studio famous for the work with The Beatles, The Spice Girls and Michael Jackson.

They will record Joy to the World, Holy Night and Gaudete.

The project, which has been organised in conjunction with music and drama specialists Creative Beat, will see the children travel to Abbey Road on November 16.

## Metro affected during line work

THE Midland Metro will face disruption for the next six weeks. The Wolverhampton to Birmingham tram line will terminate at St Pauls, while work is carried out to connect the line to Birmingham New Street.

# Man and woman in crash treated



The aftermath of the car crash

A MAN and woman were taken to hospital after the car they were travelling in went through a large metal fence, down an embankment and into a tree. Emergency services were called to Wednesbury Road at about 2.45am last Thursday.

The crash happened just at the end of the railway bridge.

West Midlands Ambulance Service said paramedics found the car with 'significant' damage.

The male driver and female passenger, both thought to be in their 30s, had managed to get out of the vehicle.

The woman had a reduced level of consciousness and had suffered cuts to her face and a leg injury.

She was treated at the scene and taken to the major trauma centre at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham where it is thought she needed to have surgery to her face.

WMAS spokesman Murray MacGregor said: "On arrival, crews found a car that had suffered very significant damage, especially to the passenger side."

"Both occupants, who were estimated to be in their 30s, had man-

aged to get out, though the woman, who was the front seat passenger, had a reduced level of consciousness."

"The woman had a nasty laceration to her face and a leg injury."

"After treatment at the scene, she was taken to the major trauma centre at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham with the doctor travelling with the crew."

"She was expected to need surgery for the facial injury. The man driving was less serious. He was complaining of back pain and was taken to Walsall Manor Hospital."

# Expert says government can secure steel future

**BLACK Country business expert Professor Mike Haynes believes with government support steel firms could be saved.**

Reflecting on last week's demise of Caparo Industries, the Professor of International Political Economy in the University of Wolverhampton's Business School, says: "Over the last 20 years UK manufacturing output has been more or less stagnant."

"Industry has fallen so far in comparative terms that even in Switzerland they produce nearly three times as much manufacturing output per head as the UK. And it's not cuckoo clocks."

"These days they import them from China. They pay for them with the high tech stuff that they sell to that country and the world."

"The crisis in the UK steel industry is part of this problem. Steel production has been cut back in most advanced economies. But the reduction in production here is one of the largest of all. Output is less than half the level of 50 years ago. The UK industry began this year with one third of the production of Germany and one half of Italy. It will likely end it with the gap even greater."

### Catastrophic

"Rich countries can and do produce steel. It should, especially at the high end, be part of a modern hi-tech complex. But faced with problems the government still seems to believe that the market knows best and nothing can or should be done to control it."

"Ironically earlier this year the Prime Minister was talking up the steel industry as a success story. Caparo presented itself as a company which was not content to rest on its laurels. That was one reason why it had close links with the university."

"But once companies like this go, the effect is catastrophic for the workers and those in the supply chain. Successful change requires clusters of firms that are mutually supportive. It needs more than ad hoc survivors of this or that market fluctuation."

"In the absence of support and an industrial policy some of Caparo may be saved. But with support, more of it, and other steel makers, could be saved. This would benefit those who work there and the immediate supply chain. It would benefit the retailers who depend on their spending power."

## Art in the frame at annual display



Great Wyrley Art Club member Glynis Haimes ahead of its annual art exhibition with members' work

SCORES of portraits, landscapes and other paintings went on show last weekend in one of the highlights of an art club's calendar.

Members of Great Wyrley Art Club showcased their work at an exhibition at the village community centre, in Landywood Lane.

More than 100 art pieces by around 20 members went on show, each with recent work and art pieces from past years featured.

Glynis Haimes, one of the club's earliest members, said of the club:

"It's purely recreational, there's no instruction. People just come along and paint, and so many turn out to be quite talented."

Mrs Haimes, who took along 14 of her pictures, joined the club 12 years ago after retiring from teaching IT at schools in Willenhall, West Bromwich and Walsall.

She said each member contributed one painting to a permanent exhibition at the community centre where the club regularly meets.

When a picture is sold, it is re-

placed by another by the same artist. "We paint in a partitioned-off area of the hall, which is small so it restricts our numbers, but it's lovely and light, with windows all down one side," said Mrs Haimes.

"For our annual exhibition, the hall is opened up and lined with our paintings. It's a very social occasion which people from the village look forward to."

The club also organises outings for members, including visiting galleries and other art-themed visits.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Partnership gets seal of approval

A MIDLANDS housing partnership has been given a royal seal of approval after being officially presented with a Queens Award for Enterprise.

The Matrix Housing Partnership, which is led by the Accord Group, became the first housing association to receive the UK's highest accolade for business earlier this year.

It was honoured in the sustainable development category for its valuable role as a social landlord, providing safe and sustainable housing.

The award was recently presented by the Duke of Kent, Prince Edward.

### Trust makes £1.3m from parking fees

THE trust that runs Sandwell and City hospitals made £1.3 million from car parking fees last year, it has been revealed.

The Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust raked in a total of £1,340,607 during 2014/15. Of that amount, £709,000 came from people parking at City Hospital and £631,000 at Sandwell General Hospital.

It comes just days after it was revealed that bosses at the trust had ruled out offering free parking for half an hour.

### Knife surrender bin is launched

A KNIFE surrender bin has been unveiled in West Bromwich. The bin has been set up in High Street, at the corner of New Street, in the town.

It comes as Sandwell's six-week Safer 6 crime-busting campaign moves its focus to West Bromwich.

Council leader Darren Cooper said: "The culture of carrying a weapon is one we must try to eradicate. This bin gives people who have them an opportunity to deposit them in a safe way, without fear of prosecution."

### Crew rescues boy after leg trapped

A SCHOOLBOY had to be rescued by firefighters after his leg became trapped between metal bars in the playground. Crews attended Featherstone Junior School in Erdington, Birmingham.

School staff made the emergency call when it became clear he was unable to free his leg. Firefighters used hydraulic equipment to spread the bars. The youngster was checked over by paramedics as a precaution, but it is not believed he was seriously hurt.

### Carnival cash boost

ORGANISERS of Pelsall Carnival have donated £4,000 to charities and good causes. The money has been distributed to the Midlands Air Ambulance, Acorns Children's Hospice, St Giles Walsall Hospice, Ryders Hayes Community School, Pelsall Musical Society among other causes.

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## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



GREAT inventions of our time. A reader reports a BBC local news webpage informing us that a cyclist involved in a crash was wearing "see-through cycling glasses." They are definitely the best sort.

BEHOLD, a bright new golden age dawns between Britain and China. China's President Xi and his wife get three nights in Buckingham Palace, a ride in a golden carriage and a meeting with William and Kate. Chinese tourists get cheaper travel visas to visit Britain. We Brits get a new nuclear power station which won't be finished until 2025 and will then produce electricity twice as expensive as it is now. You may call this a great leap forward but it looks to me like China's revenge for the Opium Wars.

INTERESTINGLY, it is estimated that the new power station at Hinkley Point will produce enough electricity to supply six million homes. It is undiplomatic to ask how much of this electricity will be consumed by Chinese tourists?

TECHNICAL terms of our age. BT says the engineers fixing my landline (yet again) may be delayed because our home is in a 'high work-stack area'.

LAST Wednesday was the exact date that Marty McFly and the Doc travelled to in the movie Back to the Future II. Cue nostalgic smiles from TV and radio presenters, a rash of celebration parties and the overuse of words such as iconic and ground-breaking. All today's hype ("The World Celebrates" - Guardian, etc) is based on the assumption that everybody not only loves the Back to the Future trilogy but remembers them word-perfectly. Include me out. They may be moderately entertaining and have a certain cultish appeal but they're not exactly Star Wars, are they?



DAME Eileen Atkins objects to men taking women's roles on the grounds that actresses already face 'an infinitely tougher time than men' on the stage. Sadly, she's up against progress. These days, regardless of race, age or gender, anyone can play anything. As Monty Python's Life of Brian reminded us, it is every man's right to be a woman.

BILL Bryson declares in his new book, The Road to Little Dribbling, that Britain was at its best in the early 1970s, having achieved 'a kind of perfection'. Really? I must have missed it. In 1971 I found shirts at Preston market for a bargain £3, while a new tyre for the car was £6. The catch? I was earning less than £12 a week. In today's global, cheap-as-chips world you cannot begin to explain how much it cost simply to feed and dress ourselves in the 1970s.

**Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star**

# Chance to mark marriage milestones

COUPLES are being invited to celebrate their long lasting marriage alongside the Mayor of Walsall.

Councillor Angela Underhill has opened her parlour doors to couples celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary with a tea party throughout the summer and autumn.

She is now looking for more couples

to mark the occasion by paying her a visit.

Councillor Underhill, who became Mayor in June, said: "We had a terrific response to our earlier invitation and I have really enjoyed welcoming so many wonderful couples into the Mayoral Parlour.

"I have loved exchanging memo-

ries with them and looking through their family photographs. I thought I knew Walsall well, but my guests have such great tales to tell about living and working in the borough.

## Fascinating

"Recollections about some of our longest-standing industries, busi-

nesses and landmarks have been fascinating and a real education."

Couples who are set to celebrate their diamond wedding anniversary throughout this winter and Spring 2016 can contact Verity Edwards, the Mayor's personal assistant, at verity.edwards@walsall.gov.uk for more information.

# Libraries and jobs under threat in cuts

By Lisa O'Brien

**LIBRARIES will close, council tax will rise and jobs will go as Walsall Council looks to make £25 million in cuts and savings.**

The leader of the council warned that its financial future was becoming 'dire' as he revealed plans to slash the budget in 2016/17.

The budget will include a 1.99 per cent hike in council tax - the absolute maximum the authority can impose without resorting to a referendum.

And the council is preparing to commit £250,000 of taxpayers' money to holding that referendum in 2017, to find out whether people are prepared to pay even more towards services.

Councillor Bird warned more job losses were on the cards and the council had not ruled out compulsory redundancies.

It comes amid warnings the authority will still be under pressure to sustain essential public services even after making cuts.

## Services

Seven out of 16 libraries and the mobile library service would shut, along with 13 jobs, as part of plans to save £328,854 next year and £159,058 the year after.

Councillor Bird said the council was looking at a model where libraries would be accessed by smart card entry, reducing the need for staff. Waste collection services are also expected to be affected.

Care and safeguarding services alone will account for £10.2m of savings next year. The authority has already consulted with residents over moving to fortnightly collections for non-recyclable rubbish.

Walsall Council leader Mike Bird described the situation as a 'perfect storm', and said he believed the referendum would allow the council to explain how services would be lost if people are not prepared to pay more.

The council tax hike will cost someone in the lowest value Band A home £21.22 a year more rising to an increase of £31.84 for Band D and higher for the larger value properties in the borough.

## Hole lot of work to do on railway bridge



Members of staff and their vehicles seen in the centre of Walsall during works to upgrade the railway line

IT was meant to bring a revamped railway bridge and electric trains by the summer - but this giant hole in the ground shows there is still a lot of work left to do.

Work started on rebuilding the bridge in Walsall town centre as part of plans to electrify 15 miles of line from Rugeley to Trent Valley last year and was originally scheduled to be completed by July.

The bridge over the railway under Park Street is more than 100 years old and needs to be rebuilt to allow overhead electricity cables to run underneath it to power trains from December 2017. The ground outside the town centre Marks & Spencer has been torn through by Network Rail workers. The work started on October 4, with Network Rail set to suspend work at the end of the

November to avoid disruption over the busy Christmas shopping period before re-commencing in January. The project is now due to be completed in Easter 2016.

Councillor Adrian Andrew, Walsall Council deputy leader, said the work 'should have started last year' and the council 'is in constant communication' with Network Rail to ensure it does not fall further behind.

He said: "To be fair, the end result is going to be worth it because it will improve our transport links." Liam Sumpter, area director for Network Rail, said: "A significant amount of work is required to upgrade the railway and much is already under way or completed as part of our investment. Replacing this bridge is essential to allow the line to be electrified."

# Watchdog's praise for police over future plans

WEST Midlands Police has been praised for its plans for the future - described as 'outstanding' by the national police watchdog.

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) found the force is 'exceptionally well-prepared' to face future challenges, keep the public safe and cut crime in the face of further funding cuts.

The HMIC named West Midlands Police as one of only five 'outstanding' forces in England and Wales.

A report says inspectors considered the force's five-year change programme, WMP2020, 'ambitious and far-reaching', and also praised its mental health triage scheme and work to analyse 'hotspots' as part of preventative work.

Deputy Chief Constable Dave Thompson said: "We've embarked on a change programme designed to ensure we can continue providing a first class service to our communities in the future...it's pleasing HMIC inspectors have recognised our efforts."

"We've made significant financial savings in recent years and coped admirably as a smaller force - a fall in total crime of 15 per cent since 2010 is testament to that - and the challenge now is to make best use of limited resources."

"We are continually monitoring demand for service and making flexible deployment decisions - most recently that saw us expand our public protection unit working in areas such as child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse."

## Rubber stamp for town plan

A FIVE-YEAR action plan to regenerate Willenhall has been rubber-stamped by council bosses.

The plans - which were labelled 'too little, too late' by Councillor Ian Shires who accused Walsall Council of initially ignoring the town in a wider regeneration scheme - include proposals for a new train station to be built.

Councillor Adrian Andrew, said: "I've been discussing with officers about the need for an action plan since May but it is only now that I've been able to bring forward this report to cabinet."

"We need a strategy to secure a future for Willenhall, which some may say is too little too late, but I hope it is a case of better late than never."

"It is not always about throwing taxpayers money at a problem."

## Former Cat may get another life

A DERELICT Willenhall pub could be given a new lease of life as a restaurant. A planning application has been submitted to turn The Cat, on Bloxwich Road South, which was formerly known as the White Swan and is currently empty, into a restaurant.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

A fond farewell to parish priest

PARISHIONERS bade farewell to a 'much-loved and respected' priest, one of very few married Roman Catholic priests in the country. Father Ronald Coslett spent the last 10 years based at St Joseph's Church in Darlston, Walsall, after leaving the Anglican Church and being ordained as a Catholic priest in 2002.

He and wife Kathleen have two children, Vanessa and Dominic, who became a vicar like his father and also later converted to Roman Catholicism. He is currently secretary to the Archbishop of Birmingham Bernard Longley. The couple also have two grandchildren, William and Sophie.

Fr Coslett senior was given a warm send-off by his flock at a reception following morning Mass at St Joseph's on Sunday.

Around 150 people attended the service and celebration afterwards.

Disruption due to gas repairs

MAJOR delays are expected this week, after part of a busy road in Wednesbury was made one-way for urgent repairs to a gas main.

Restrictions are in place at Leabrook Road, with the work expected to take until October 30 to complete.

And officers said long queues were expected especially at the roundabout at Gospel Park Road/Leabrook Road and around the Lions Island in Great Bridge. Vehicles will be allowed to travel in a south-westerly direction only between Chillington Road and the roundabout at Gospel Oak Road.

Officers said repairs to the main were needed following a gas escape.

Road resurface scheme in town

MOTORISTS will face more than a week of diversions due to carriageway resurfacing in Walsall.

Bescot Road has shut to north-bound traffic between the junctions of A4148 Wallows Lane and A4038 Darlston Road for a carriageway resurfacing scheme. Traffic unable to use the affected carriageway will be diverted via A4148 Wallows Lane, A4148 Broadway West, Weston Street, West Bromwich Street, Corporation Street and Wednesbury Road.

It is expected the one way system will remain in place until Monday.

Town rated 29th least prosperous

WALSALL has been ranked the 29th least prosperous place to live in the UK in a new survey.

The borough fared better than Wolverhampton and Sandwell in the study by think tank The Legatum Institute.

It compared the prosperity of 170 areas across Britain.

Walsall also came in at 125th for life satisfaction, with a rating of 7.5, and 138th for GDP per capita, with an average salary of £14,749.

Snapper's wintry scene commended



Winter's Seat, near Bridgnorth

IN the dead of winter an old tree stands silhouetted in a field of spent straw stalks, set against a backdrop of dark and foreboding skies.

This stunning shot, taken by snapper Paul Hassell, who lives in Walsall, has been commended at this year's Landscape Photographer of the Year awards.

Titled Winters Walk, the picture was taken near Bridgnorth and forms part of a collection of Winter-themed photographs which have been taken by Mr Hassell.

He said: "Driving home one late

afternoon along a country lane, I noticed this scene on the brow of a hill.

"A placement of a large old tree, a seat and a smaller sibling tree, along with a pathway.

"In the foreground, there was a field of spent straw stalks still showing some of their natural colours," said Mr Hassell.

"The scene immediately caught my imagination and, having gone back several times, winter's walk was born," he explained.

"A gentlemen worn by time in his winter years walks towards his trusty

seat in early winter when nature is also shutting down, symbolising two versions of the season coming together."

Mr Hassell's work will be displayed alongside other winning entries on the Balcony at London's Waterloo station from November 23 until February 7.

The annual competition was founded by renowned photographer Charlie Waite and aims to celebrate all that is great about the British landscape.

Combined authority 'nail in council coffin'

JOINING the West Midlands Combined Authority could mark 'the final nail in the coffin on local councils', according to councillors in Walsall.

During a special full council meeting to decide whether the borough would join Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Dudley, Coventry, Solihull and Tamworth in forming a combined authority to work together on transport, regeneration and skills, 43 members showed their support, while six voted against and four abstained.

Combined authorities are legal bodies with powers of decision-making granted by parliament and are a new way for local authorities to work together on areas that cross geographical council boundaries.

However, despite the strong number of votes favouring the move, some Walsall councillors believe the combined authority would be troublesome for the area.

Disappointed

Councillor Pete Smith, who represents Blakenhall, said: "I was very disappointed with the decision, which the council has rushed into.

"They have made one of the biggest decisions in local government for 30 years or more without knowing the full ins and outs.

"From Whitehall this may look like a revolution but from Walsall it looks like devolution. I think this is a nail in the coffin for local councils."

Councillor Lee Jeavons, who represents the Birchills Leamore area, stopped short of criticising the decision, but said: "In some ways it is difficult to gauge the merit of this decision right now.

"It is a bit like Deal or No Deal, where you don't know what is in the box that is being offered."

Meanwhile, Councillor Dennis Anson, who represents Pleck, said: "I believe it will be the end of Walsall.

"I think it is just one more step towards stripping Walsall of its chance to improve its own business interests. In years to come, we will feel the impact of this decision."

Councillor Rose Burley, who represents Bentley and Darlston North said she hoped that, if done right, the combined authority would lead to a new start for Walsall.

She said: "My take on it is that the combined authority will hopefully result in investment for our district centres, such as Darlston.



Volunteers Jannet Smith, aged 75, from Aldridge and Heather Jones, 75, from Pelsall knit poppies for the Remembrance Day appeal

Special poppies to bring colour

HUNDREDS of poppies have already been knitted in response to a special Remembrance Day plea.

Nimble-fingered volunteers have been helping to create poppies to decorate a village memorial clock in Walsall. It is hoped the poppies will completely cover the memorial in Pelsall.

So far, around 450 woolly tributes have been handed in and those taking part have been given certificates.

The Big Knit is the brainchild of Councillor Garry Perry, who represents the ward. He said: "It is fantastic. The appeal has captured the imagination of the village."

He said 75-year-old Heather Jones, who lives in the village, had also knitted 100 poppies to help with the appeal. Councillor Perry added: "We've been overwhelmed by the support."

The poppies will be placed on the memorial clock on October 31 and a Royal British Legion volunteer will collect donations at the spot until Remembrance Day on November 11. Anyone wanting to take part can call Councillor Perry on 07960 503512.

Five Ws bid for Metro is off track say chiefs

A LONG-AWAITED Metro route linking Walsall with the Black Country has lost the support of the borough's council after bosses said it was 'pretty clear' the scheme was dead.

The proposed '5 Ws' line would take the trams from Wolverhampton, through Wednesfield, Willenhall, Walsall before reconnecting to the Birmingham line at Wednesbury.

But, while Centro funding has been made available for other transport schemes in the region over that period, the idea has never got off the ground.

Walsall Council has decided to drop support the scheme, deciding instead to back plans for new railway stations in Willenhall and Darlston.

Councillor Adrian Andrew, Deputy Leader for Walsall Council said: "It's pretty clear we're not going to get the 5Ws tram link.

"The Metro scheme was designed more than two decades ago but it's just too expensive and comes at a time when local authorities and public bodies no longer have access to that level of funding. What we are certain about is that we need to plan properly for our town centre and communities."

Walsall Council, along with other local authorities, has now asked for a review of all the Black Country Rapid Transit Routes.

Councillor Andrew added: "And so whilst the 5Ws scheme is pretty much on the back burner as far as we're concerned, we need to look at alternative ways of creating better links between our towns in the Black Country."

Call to take up flu jabs offer

PEOPLE are being encouraged to get their free flu jab as winter approaches. Anyone in an 'at-risk' group, including pregnant women, people over 65 and carers, qualify for a free vaccination, which will be given out at some pharmacies across Walsall for the first time.

Dr Raj Mandal, GP at Lockstown Practice in Willenhall and Walsall CCG's flu champion, said: "The flu vaccine is available now, so I would urge anyone who is offered a free flu vaccination to visit their GP or pharmacy now.

"It is quick, safe and free. Contrary to popular myth it can't give you flu because it has no live vaccine."

For more information visit [www.nhs.uk/staywell](http://www.nhs.uk/staywell)

Homes scheme for town pub

MORE than 20 homes will built on the site of a former Walsall pub under new plans. Sukhjit Khara has lodged proposals to demolish the Wheel Inn in Lindon Road, Brownhills and replace it with an apartment block.

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area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people



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**IN MY VIEW**  
with Mark Andrews

# Leaders force the issue on diversity

WHAT would you say is your biggest concern about policing at the moment?

The fact they are closing down police stations in half of the Black Country? Or maybe the police chief who said we should not automatically expect the boys in blue to come running when we have been affected by something so trivial as a burglary.

Then there is the proliferation of speed cameras financed by the booming industry of "speed awareness courses", where motorists pay £90 to spend the day being patronised by tedious public-sector types to avoid getting points on their licence.

However, it appears that Home Secretary Theresa May believes there is a more pressing issue. A lack of diversity in the ranks. I must admit, I was a bit worried about that, too. All those sleepless nights agonising about diversity targets, they take their toll you know.

Mrs May says not one of the 43 forces in England and Wales looks anything like the community they serve. Now, of course, it should be a most basic requirement that the police treat everybody equally, regardless of race or religion, both when dealing with the public and in recruitment. But that should be the beginning and the end of the matter.

Surely, rigging the recruitment process to make forces a perfect cross-section of society is taking a sledgehammer to crack a nut. If we were really serious about having a police force that represents the society we live in, there would need to be far more targets. For example, the Health and Social Care Information Centre says 66.6 per cent of the UK population are overweight. So our officers had better make it burgers and chips in the canteen, then.

Also, around one in every 1,000 people has a burglary conviction. Does that mean we need a few token house-breakers? And what about the 500,000 people in England over the age of 90? Old folk should be represented too.

An alternative approach is that we could just forget all about diversity, and choose the best people for the job, regardless of their background. Controversial, I know, but it might catch on.

■ ■ ■

ANOTHER little ray of sunshine comes from those fun-loving funksters at the National Institute for Clinical Excellence. They say there is now no safe level of alcohol for middle-aged people, and even modest consumption of beer or wine for people aged 40 to 65 can increase the risk of dementia and result in an eventual memory loss.

Meanwhile, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence says there is no safe level of alcohol consumption for middle-aged people. Even modest consumption of beer or wine can lead to dementia and memory loss. I think.



Bill in his Suffolk Regiment uniform



With his Army compatriots, Bill, seen far right, was a survivor of the Japanese prisoner of war camps



Bill seen in later life as a war veteran

# Hero Bill who lived a long and happy life

**LEE WATTON** tells the remarkable story of former Japanese prisoner of war Bill Wheale who has died aged 97

**THE horrific scenes he witnessed would haunt anyone for the rest of their life – but former prisoner of war William Wheale did not let these experiences define him.**

And tributes are now being paid to the great-grandfather from Tipton, who has died aged 97.

Better known as Bill, his family has paid tribute to a man with a terrific sense of humour and whose greatest pride was that all of his five grandchildren attended university.

During the Second World War, Bill's unit, the 4th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment, was taken captive when the Japanese conquered Singapore in February 1942.

He was marched inland to work on the infamous Burma Railway, a military supply route for the expanding Japanese empire.

## Fortnight

And when cholera hit the prison camp where he was held, Bill was put to work burying the dead. In a single fortnight his squad were burying 40 corpses a day – and would not be fed until the grim task was completed.

Bill's son Roger, 69, said while the experiences had understandably stayed with his father for the rest of his life he had not let them define who he was.

And unlike many, he was able to tell his family some of the details of what he had witnessed and experienced during his time as a prisoner of war – although some of the worst experiences were pushed to the back of his mind.

Roger said: "He had the occasional nightmare but was able to move on. He used to share some of the things he had experienced.

"He used to talk about how the jungle was velvet black at night and the sounds of the animals were so loud it was like machinery. Then



Bill Wheale's widow Ivy and son Roger with a picture of him during the Second World War

a tiger would make a noise and all of the other animals would fall silent for a time." Roger said his father had also talked about the lack of food given to the prisoners and the methods they used to try and get more sustenance.

"He always used to say dried yak was too chewy to describe and on one occasion him and three others had captured a vulture to try to eat. They boiled it in an oil drum for three days and it was still not edible. They decided to try and use it as bait but nothing else wanted it either." Bill also spoke of his first meal after being freed in 1945. He used to say: "I ate 27 rounds of bread and butter and five courses of every meal."

Roger said he had never really known his father to worry about anything. "During his time as a prisoner of war he had seen everything – beatings, decapitations – the true harshness of life and death. I don't think any-

thing else, any other situation, was able to hit him in the same way." After enduring the ordeal of cholera, Bill's right leg became so ulcerated that amputation seemed inevitable.

His mates scrounged a handful of toilet-disinfectant crystals. The camp doctor scraped the ulcer away to the bone and covered the cavity with the crystals. When the wound went septic, a handful of maggots was applied to digest the pus. He survived but it was a close-run thing.

Bill's war ended when the crew of a submarine spotted the smoke from a fire and sent someone to investigate. It was August 29, 1945. He returned home by slow boat so did not arrive back in Britain until the end of 1945.

Bill married his wife of nearly 70 years, Ivy, now 98, in 1946 at Netherton Church. The couple had met in Priory Park, Dudley, before



Bill, left, during a wreath-laying ceremony

the war. His best man was friend Norman Sargeant.

He went to work at engineering firm Horseley Bridge and Thomas Piggott working his way up from clerk to transport manager before his retirement in the 1980s.

Bill is survived by Ivy, Roger, other son Adrian, 63, alongside five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

He died at his home following complications with his heart and his funeral was held on October 15 at Gornal Wood Crematorium. Roger said: "He was very proud of the work Horseley Bridge did and was most proud that all of his grandchildren went to university. He had a sense of humour and was not above laughing at himself.

"Whatever situation he was in he never seemed to worry. He had seen it all. He will be deeply missed."

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# Dementia is the forgotten illness

I HAVE read with interest the letters from M Bristow and S Small as I am also caring for my husband who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's five years ago. I was in a position of being able to pick up the difficulties he was presenting early but it was 18 months getting the diagnosis.

I call it the forgotten illness as once diagnosed there seems to be nothing put into place by professional and government bodies to help the dementia sufferers and their carers and families. That is why I think GPs are sometimes reluctant giving a firm diagnosis.

You see a once vital man lose his everyday functioning and understanding, not able to see danger and losing all pleasure in life, depending on his family and their ability to cope with the distress this brings. My husband and myself in the past have for 15 years worked and cared for young people who have had mental health and learning difficulties in our own home.

We know that with dementia there is no way that they will recover but will only get worse but with some thought to the carers if they had some support and somewhere that they could go with

their loved one in the community that provided supervised activities, this would make such a difference.

I like M Bristow have had the experience of having a professional come into our home to help fill in forms for attendance allowance that we were advised to get. We did not get attendance allowance, and I would not put him through the upset of appeal. Is it a lack of understanding by government and professionals or just that end of life care is not important?

T BARLOW  
Walsall

## Mass-ive response to TV gripe

IN response to B Williams' letter relating to an earlier letter of mine. The broadcast of Solemn Mass from Milan was hypothetical, not real, just demonstrating the absurdity of TV schedulers' deference to a minority interest, sport, by imagining reaction if they similarly deferred to the (larger) minority interested in religion.

The cookery programmes which irritate B Williams may occur several times a week, but they form part of the normal schedule. Sport may occur 'once or twice a week', but the once may be matches one after the other from midday until the late evening news. The obsession then continues with 'highlights' until midnight!

Mind you, I suppose I might up my culinary game by watching cookery shows, while no amount of sport watching will get me kicking a ball like Mr Beckham or driving round the Walsall ring road like Mr Hamilton.

A T HARRISON  
Walsall

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Without any written proof, you are stuck, they will want paying.

They will accept card payment. It can be done straight away.

These shysters generally pick on the elderly and particularly women on their own.

Tell them 'no' and close the door on these crooks.

Should you want a proper price, get in touch with some-one you know, who has already had a good job done.

RAY HAMMOND  
Alexandra Way  
Aldridge

## Bus lane 'con' over camera

I AM writing in response to the letter printed 'crafty camera' on Friday. I totally agree with their views: I was one of the many who have been issued with this fine. It is indeed a cash-con for the council.

The extended bus stop is no way a bus lane by any definition. The end should be clearly marked but then if that was the case no one would enter, so no fines.

There is a serious need for a council rethink, they obviously don't use it or would see the problems of trying to turn left at the lights. When they realise their error will they refund us all?

R HARRIS  
Bloxwich

## Speed humps are damaging

I AM writing about the speed bumps along Harden Road, Walsall, they are severe. We have had both front suspension springs broken. We feel like sending Walsall Council the bill.

E ROCHELLE  
Walsall

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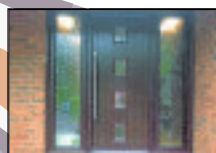
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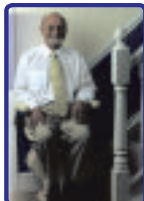
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# Super fan Paul has seen Saddlers 2,000 times

**WALSALL'S 2-0 victory over Barnsley was a double celebration for one dedicated Saddlers fan.**

The game at Oakwell was 59-year-old Paul Leadbeater's 2,000th Walsall game and he was treated to a win thanks to second-half goals from debutant George Evans and Milan Lalkovic. "I've been supporting Walsall a long time," said Paul. "The first game I went to was a 1-1 draw with Darlington. I actually missed our goal because my dad took me out early to beat the traffic."

"We went outside and heard a roar, rushed back in and saw the players celebrating so I've never left a game early since then."

With 2,000 games under his belt, Paul, from Aldridge, has many away grounds to choose from when picking his favourite but, surprisingly, his favourite ground is just down the road in Wolverhampton.

"I love going to Molineux because we always seem to play well there and take a good following," he said. "I love going to all the Midlands clubs because it's a fantastic atmosphere."

"I've travelled very far watching Walsall, the furthest being Blyth Spartans in the FA Cup which was in the early 70s. We won 2-1 so it made the four-hour journey home a lot better."

Narrowing that amount of games down to a favourite would be a tricky task for some, but Paul has one that stands out by far.

"The 2-2 at Anfield in 1984 is easily the most memorable game I've been to when we played Liverpool in the Milk Cup," he said.

The Saddlers were under the management of Alan Buckley at the time - Paul's all-time favourite Walsall player.



**Paul Leadbeater from Aldridge, celebrates attending his 2000th match**

"He was absolutely outstanding," added Paul. "What would he be worth in today's money?"

"Hands down the best player I've ever seen down at Walsall and the best player I'm likely to see in my lifetime."

Buckley scored 125 goals in 241 appearances and went on to be a part

of Walsall's management from 1978-1986.

Paul has loved Walsall's fantastic start to the season with the Saddlers currently sitting in second place in League One behind Gillingham by just two points. "I think the team has been excellent so far this season..."



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## Pleasure pictures at an exhibition



Some of the Pleasure Painters Art Group showing their art work at Rushall Parish Church

FROM picturesque countrysides to playful pussycats – a Walsall group of artists has put their work on display for the first time in years.

The Pleasure Painters showcased more than 50 paintings recently at Rushall Parish Church.

The exhibition, held in the venue where they meet twice a week, marked a return to subjecting their work to public scrutiny.

Hazel Jones, 81, who runs the group, said: "It has been some time since we did our last one so we thought it was about time we did another public exhibition. The parish hall is beautifully lit

with lots of windows, so it makes for a good venue.

"There were 52 paintings on show, a lot of them oil paintings and water colours.

"They were of a lot of different things, views of the countryside, boats, cats.

"The whole group has been very excited and enthusiastic about it." And Ms Jones vowed they would be returning next year to hold another exhibition.

She added: "We have learnt a lot from doing this. We are definitely going to do this again, it has been a

good experience" Ms Jones, from the Walsall Arts Society, set up Pleasure Painters 11 years ago with two friends. It has blossomed from three original members to ten times that amount.

She added: "It is mainly elderly people, it is a very social thing we get together lots and have a good time.

"We go out to different places and paint the countryside and things like that. It's great."

All paintings on display were available to purchase and 10 per cent of the money raised was donated towards Saint Michael the Archangel Rushall Parish Church.

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## Sally is still fit as she hits the ton



**Celebrating her 100th birthday is Sarah Wooldridge, with family members, including, front right, her son David of Dorset**

SALLY Wooldridge has prided herself on keeping fit and healthy for decades which seems to have kept her in good stead as she has turned 100.

The former office worker and shop owner was surrounded by friends and family to celebrate the big day at Cedar Falls nursing home in Walsall, and enjoyed a special cake covered with pictures from her life.

Born in Moxley, Mrs Wooldridge, whose real name is Sarah, was one of seven children.

She trained as a shorthand typist, but ended up running the greengrocer's shop on Moat Road with her

husband, John. Her grand-daughter, Vicky Brindley, 35, said: "We've always been really close. She has always been really fit and healthy."

"That must be the key to a long life. I'm hoping it's genes, but it's probably her fitness."

The mother was a keen runner and has several awards. She also enjoyed tennis, cycling and walking.

Sally kept up her interest and running into old age, when she'd go out with her young grandchildren. She also enjoyed baking.

Her husband died more than 40 years ago, but Sally stayed independ-

ent into her 90s, regularly going to St John's Church, Walsall Wood. Sally and John had two children, Cheryl, now aged 60, and David, 65.

Mrs Brindley said: "She was on her own for 45 years and she worked at a cleaning job until she was in her 90s."

"She was driving her car until she was 95, helping people get to church. She was always very happy."

Sally moved to Cedar Falls care home around two years ago. She lived next door to Mrs Brindley, who cared for her until she moved to Cedar Falls. Anya Mason, manager at Cedar Falls said: "It was a brilliant day."

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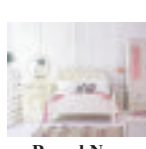
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Helen's on song for her big break



Helen James, who hopes to be successful as a singer

A MOTHER from the Black Country has made it through to the regional final of a national singing competition.

Helen James, aged 43, from Wednesbury, was shocked to discover she had made it to the finals of Open Mic UK – after her husband, Spencer, sent off an audition tape without her knowledge. “I was on holiday at the time, so I couldn’t make it to an audition, and I didn’t have a clue he had sent anything off,” Mrs James explained.

“It was just a video of me singing a Cher song at home, so I was really surprised when I got a call to invite me to perform in front of the judges.” The mother-of-four, from Shaftesbury Road, was in the line-up for the competition which took place at Nottingham on Sunday.

Former X Factor contestants Lucy Spraggan and Jahmene Douglas have found success from the competition before – which sees a £20,000 prize pool up for grabs and the chance to be scouted by major record labels.

Before the contest, Mrs James said: “I’m a little nervous about the show but really excited too – I’m just going to get up there and do my best.”

# Art gallery may see its opening hours cut

THE New Art Gallery Walsall will have its opening hours slashed and shut on Sundays under cost-cutting plans by the cash-strapped council.

Walsall Council wants to close the facility two days a week, instead of just Mondays, and shut the building at 4pm on Tuesdays to Fridays for 20 weeks of the year.

The proposals aim to save the authority £19,360 in the next financial year. The landmark building was the victim of money-saving measures back in 2011, leading to its closure on Sundays and bank holidays and sparking Walsall South MP Valerie Vaz to launch a petition to try and force the council to make a U-turn.

Although it was decided a year later that the gallery would reopen on Sundays, its opening hours are now under threat again just three years on.

Labour councillor Aftab Nawaz, who represents the St Matthews ward, said closing the art gallery on Sundays would be a shame and a regressive step for Walsall.

He said: “There are many people in Walsall who respect art and the art gal-

By Lisa O'Brien

lery has put the town on the map. Weekends are a time when families can get together and visit the art gallery.

“To have that shut on a Sunday is a regressive step in my mind. “It’s the Government cuts which are really to blame. I understand that difficult choices have to be made.”

The art gallery, in Gallery Square, is currently open between 10am and 5pm on Tuesdays to Saturdays, and on Sundays it opens from midday to 4pm. It is closed on Mondays and bank holidays. As part of proposals by the council to save £25m in 2016/17, the gallery would close an hour earlier on weekdays between October and March as well as being closed on Sundays.

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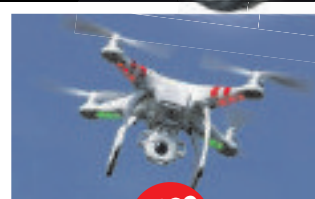
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# Students are made up over horrible visions

FROM zombies to vampires – these frightening faces have been created by college make-up students to freeze the blood of passengers aboard Halloween boat trips.

The creations are the work of level-two media hair and make-up students at Walsall College.

They have been working to perfect the ghoulish designs throughout the term as part of an assessed unit on their course.

The students will be providing make-overs for the college's travel and tourism students, who will be supporting Dudley Canal Trust, by coordinating the boat trips and also helping to frighten guests.

Trips will be taking place on October 28.

Visitors will be treated to spooky special effects, stories and a few surprises.

The hair and make-up course, which launched in September, focuses on developing students' artistic skills in applying make-up and body art.

They learn how to create a range of special effects used by make-up artists working in the growing TV, film and theatre industry.

Each term students will face a new make-up challenge, which will be assessed and form part of their final grade.

While this term is Halloween looks, during the academic year they will also be tasked with creating looks which fall under cartoon and out of this world themes.

At the end of the year they will work on their final major projects and showcase their best work at the college's annual creative fashion show.

Student, Amani Rehmand, 32, said: "In just a few weeks on course I've already learned so much. Hair and



Artist Amani Rehmand and Immi Virgo



Student Jodie Williams, front



Made up - Abbie Jenkins



Maddison Williams, aged 19

make-up has always been a big passion of mine and when I heard about this course and the careers it could lead to, I thought it sounded perfect for me."

Fellow student, Jodie Griffiths, 19, said: "Volunteering at the canal will really test us creatively as we won't have the tutors with us for support

and guidance. But it will be a great chance to gain experience working with clients and to their individual requests. It's something I'm looking forward to."

The students will also be providing makeovers for the college's Travel and Tourism students.

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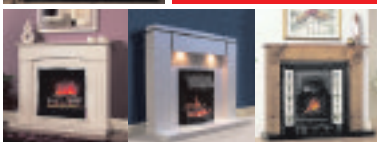
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## Glyn saddles up for capital challenge



Glyn Marston, from Willenhall, who is to run the London Marathon and also a 100 mile bike ride for charity

SPORT endurance enthusiast Glyn Marston is set to challenge London, taking on the Marathon and 100-mile Olympic cycle route for charity.

The 52-year-old from Willenhall is no stranger to long distance events, but it's the first time he's taken part in the marathon since having a titanium knee replacement nearly a decade ago.

He said: "I'm calling it Challenge London. I'll be doing the London Marathon on April 24 and RideLondon-Surrey 100 - along a similar route to the Olympic cyclists - from July 30.

"If you'd have asked me 10 years ago, I'd have said that the cycling was

going to be harder than the marathon, but now I think the marathon will be the tough one.

"I founded Walsall Warriors Dodgeball club, so I've kept fit playing that. Even though I've not run for 10 years, I've still got a level of fitness that I'm quite pleased with. "I was forced to give up long distance running because of my knee, but the plan is for it to be more like a power walk. It costs a lot of money to have the surgery done and it'd be an insult to people waiting for a knee if I risked it.

"The goal is to get from A to B as quickly and as safely as possible." Glyn

won't be going easy on himself though, aiming for a respectable time of five and a half hours in the marathon.

He hopes to raise £1000 for each event, which he'll give to Epilepsy Action, a condition he has been dealing with for almost 40 years. He said: "It hit me out of the blue. One minute I was an active teenager, the next I was having seizures for what I thought was no reason. It changed my life."

Glyn is best known for his Triple Tower Challenge. He is the only person to have cycle 1700 miles from the Leaning Tower of Pisa to the Eiffel Tower and then to Blackpool Tower.



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# A second petition is drawn up on bus lane

A SECOND petition has been launched concerning a controversial bus lane in Walsall – the latest calling for the complete removal of the lane, with more than 1,000 signatures

The online petition launched by Bloxwich Councillor Shaun Fitzpatrick wants the lane in Bloxwich High Street to be abolished. It has already attracted 1,010 people to sign it.

Another petition had been launched calling for the camera monitoring the bus lane to be taken down.

It emerged around 3,500 drivers were caught in its first week – raking in £105,000 in penalties.

Councillor Fitzpatrick has handed his latest petition to Walsall Council.

But people have continued to sign the petition.

Councillor Fitzpatrick said: "That bus lane is not in the right position. It's like an extended bus stop rather than a bus lane. It causes a build up of traffic in the right hand lane making turning left into Somerfield Road a problem during peak times. Now that I've handed the petition in it should be discussed at a scrutiny meeting."

Scores of people have also left comments online, with one person calling it '100

By Lisa O'Brien

yards of madness'. Robert Rowbotham, of Walsall, said compliance was often impossible for vehicles making a left turn into Somerfield Road and could be dangerous in certain circumstances.

He added: "It's a totally unfair cash cow and for Walsall Council and should be removed immediately."

Gary Timmins, of Walsall, wrote: "I am signing this petition because the traffic is slow enough through Bloxwich without this bottleneck slowing things down further."

Community leaders said the camera, which was installed on September 22, was trapping people who have no alternative to join the last few yards of the lane at busy times or risk causing huge traffic jams.

## Singer Isabella, 9, gets Louis' backing



Louis Walsh with Isabella Giorgio-Jones, aged nine, from Willenhall, who made it to the final of Talent Fest UK

A TALENTED young singer wowed former X Factor judge Louis Walsh as she finished second in a national talent competition and is now preparing to show Simon Cowell her skills.

Isabella Giorgio-Jones, aged nine, from Willenhall, made it to the final of Talent Fest UK after impressing previous judges with her rendition of There's Been A Change In Me, from Beauty and the Beast, at a Birmingham heat.

After showcasing her talents with a performance of My House from Matilda in the final, held at the Winter Gardens venue in Blackpool, Isabella was given the runner-up prize and an audition with Britain's Got Talent on October 27. Isabella's father, Keith Jones, said: "When we found out she had finished as runner-up I am sure we jumped two foot in the air. It was such a shock."

"She had tonsillitis all week as well, so she really managed to pull something special out of the bag. "Louis Walsh said that he liked her voice, she was quietly confident and has the potential to be great."

Aside from her vocal talent, Isabella is also learning to play piano and is already a champion roller skater.

# Take the lead and give these dogs a new life

THEY have become part of the family at a rescue centre in the Black Country – but these dogs are searching for a new home.

Rosedene Rescue Centre, in Rushall, is looking to rehome a variety of breeds – some of whom have been in the kennels for more than two years.

Among the canines on the lookout for new homes are three Staffordshire Bull Terriers. Eight-year-old Princess first came to the rescue centre in Radley Road more than a year ago.

She was rehomed with a couple but was brought back around five months ago due to her owner changing jobs.

Barney, another Staffordshire Bull Terrier, has been with the rescue centre in kennels almost all of his life.

The five-year-old cannot be rehomed with other cats and dogs, but staff say he is good around children of all ages.

## Volunteer

Staffordshire Bull Terrier cross Roxy has been at the rescue centre for more than two years and the four-year-old is now hoping to settle down with a family.

Rebecca Lawlor, who has been a volunteer at the centre for around five years, said: "Princess is beautiful. She's friendly and affectionate. She is not good with other dogs but is good with children."

"Barney is also a lovely lad and is good with children. Roxy is very quiet and tends to stand back a bit when people see her, but she would be great in a family environment."

Staff are also looking to rehome one-year-old German Shepherd Cross, George, who would be better suited to older children due to his excitable nature. Mrs Lawlor said: "He's a large dog so would suit being rehomed somewhere with older children. He's been



Volunteer Tracey Johnson with Bear



Akita, Blaze, at Rosedene for six months



Roxy, another long term resident

here over a year. All of the dogs have been handed in by previous owners for different reasons."

Also looking for a home is two-year-old Blaze who is an Akita and would not suit a home with cats or children.

He has been a resident at the rescue centre for around six months after being handed in due to his owner be-



Princess, looking for a new home

coming unwell and unable to care for him any more.

The sixth dog on the lookout for a home is Bear, a five-year-old Mastiff, who behaves well around children but is not good with other animals.

Mrs Lawlor urged anyone interested in adopting the dogs to visit the rescue centre or call 01922 627013.

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## Petition move on plans for pub

A PLANNED transformation of a former pub in Moxley into a house has sparked fears in the community and hundreds of residents to sign a petition.

Proposals have been lodged to transform the old Royal George pub, in Hughes Road, into 13 units with shared facilities, including the kitchen, bathrooms and living space.

The building is currently a five-bedroom property but operated as a pub more than a decade ago. Darlington South councillor Chris Bott said the change of use applica-

tion to a house of multiple occupancy could have a wide range of uses and has caused concerns among residents.

She said she had helped residents to launch a petition, which is available to sign at Moxley People's Centre, and it had already gathered 500 signatures.

Councillor Bott said: "It could be changed into anything.

"Some residents are frightened it could become a bail hostel. I don't think even beds will fit in around this area."

## Beach patrol fears after drowning of man in rescue bid

A GRANDFATHER from the Black Country died trying to rescue two teenage girls from the sea –while beach patrol staff did nothing, an inquest heard.

Richard Guest, aged 74, suffered a heart attack after coming to the aid of the 13-year-olds at Welsh holiday resort Tywyn, near Aberdovey, in July. Recording a death by misadventure, coroner Peter Brunton criticised the beach patrol marshals present that day. He said: "It seems the beach did have patrol marshals but they did not go into the water. This gives cause for concern.

"They remained totally passive as far as this tragic event was concerned."

Mr Guest's family has also raised concerns about the lack of action from staff.

His daughter Ceri Donovan said: "There were patrol marshals but no-one did anything. I think it raises serious questions about safety at that particular beach."

Ms Donovan said her father had been a strong swimmer and was used to the waters there. The inquest was told Mr Guest had been on holiday with his 71-year-old wife Margaret at the time.

### Roughest

She told the hearing, held in Aberystwyth, that her husband had not been aware he had a heart condition.

Mr Guest was joined by another man, Stephen Adams, in his effort to help the two girls. Mr Adams described the conditions had been the roughest he had ever been in and was 'like a washing machine.'

"We converged in about the same area and I was way out of my depth," he said.

"I was struggling to get back to the shore and asked the girl if she could manage for a moment while I took some reprieve."

"I got her again and came close into the beach where Mr Guest appeared to be treading water. When I went back I could see that Mr Guest was face down."

Mr Guest was airlifted to Bronglais Gen-



Richard Guest, aged 74, who tried to save two youngsters in the water at Tywyn

eral Hospital in Aberystwyth where he was pronounced dead.

Mr Brunton said: "While it is possible a cardiac event was triggered by exertion in the water, on the balance of probabilities the cause of death is drowning."

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Carnage – aftermath of the Heinkel plane which plummeted into houses in Warley



Hero – Sgt Henry Erskin Bodien nicknamed 'Snowy'



A formation of planes belonging to the KG55 Luftwaffe bomber unit



Police sift through wreckage of the Hales Lane plane crash



Bristnall Hall Senior School for Boys with a barrage balloon

# When the bombs rained down on Brum and the Black Country

THE sirens wailed as nine German bombers droned overhead before a huge fireball lit up the sky as a gas works was hit. The war had arrived in the Black Country.

It was August 1940 when the first bombs were dropped on the region, with Smethwick being the first to suffer from an attack by Hitler's Luftwaffe.

By the time it was over, dozens lay dead and homes and businesses were razed to the ground.

The Heinkel bombers returned later in November to inflict major damage for the first time, the strike on the Corporation Gas Works in Rabone Lane was a mere scratch compared to what was to come.

Bombs had begun to rain down on Birmingham for the first time three months earlier, with factories in Castle Bromwich among the first targets successfully hit.

## MEMORY LANE

Report by Richard Guttridge

At this point, the Black Country was still managing to escape largely unharmed, but it was widely accepted that it was only a matter of time.

Birmingham and the Black Country were among the most important areas of the country strategically and, before long, factories in Smethwick, Oldbury and West Bromwich, crucial to the war effort, would come to the notice of the German military.

The pummeling the Midlands took at the hands of the Germans during the Second World War has been documented by Steve Richards in his new book *The Luftwaffe Over Brum*.

His mother lived in Warley at the time and would tell tales during his childhood of German planes crashing nearby and pilots parachuting onto the roofs of neighbouring homes in what was a terrifying time.

Her recollections inspired him to delve deeper into the West Midlands air raids. The book details the worst bombings to hit the region, the thinking behind the attacks and the effect on ordinary people trying to survive amid the chaos.

Despite being blind Mr Richards, aged 68, has put the book together over three and a half years with the assistance of friends. His mother Doris Bannister was just 13 when the bombing began.

Mr Richards believes his mother was perhaps too young to truly recognise the horrors of war that was going on around her, though the loud wailing of the air raid sirens never left her.

He said: "She would look over towards Birmingham and the sky was aglow with flames."

"She always used to say when she heard an air raid siren on a film or anything, her stomach would turn over."

If there were any doubts that the bombers would return after that first major attack, they were well and truly quashed just

24 hours later when the Black Country came under heavy fire.

In December, the bombers returned with force. They carried out attacks in two phases. In Smethwick, the W&T Avery factory's gun carriage department and Samuel Smith Beehive foundry were hit by parachute mines.

Sgt Henry Erskin Bodien and his 19-year-old New Zealand air-gunner Dudley Jonas flying the RAF plane were among the allied men protecting the Black Country.

One of the aircraft found its mark and the enemy plane burst into flames and hurtled into a descent. With two of the German crew dead, the two remaining German fighters took to their parachutes.

The bombings lasted until July 1942 when, apart from a lone bomber on a solo mission a year later, the skies above the Black Country and Birmingham went quiet. The Luftwaffe's assault had cost the lives of more than 150 people in the Black Country alone. The book is available from [www.birmingham-air-raids.co.uk](http://www.birmingham-air-raids.co.uk) or Amazon.

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Preview – Page 21



### He's the daddy

Paddy McGuinness at  
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# Brave new take on classic novel

**WOLVERHAMPTON** Grand Theatre welcomes the world premiere of the new stage adaptation of Aldous Huxley's classic novel, *Brave New World*, from Monday to Saturday.

Featuring the offspring of theatrical royalty, the cast includes Sophie Ward, daughter of Simon, and William Postlethwaite, son of Pete. It is directed by James Dacre, whose father Paul is editor of the Daily Mail.

Sophie wed Korean-American writer Rena Brannan in a well-publicised ceremony in 2000, before same-sex civil partnerships were legalised in Britain and is a campaigner for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights. If some say her sexuality defines her, she says: "I don't have a problem with that."

Sophie plays 'the controller', in the original novel a man. Feminist playwright Dawn King says she wanted to increase the gender equality.

As someone not afraid to stand up for what she believes, does Sophie think that's why she was picked to play the part? "Maybe I am known for being outspoken but I have often played quite strong parts on TV and in theatre," says Sophie. "There is a real balance with the character. She's so powerful but because of Dawn's clever writing you see that underneath it's difficult being in charge of things, it comes with its own price. You see her own doubts, her own sacrifices."

Written in 1931, the ground-breaking novel was ranked fifth on the list



Sophie Ward, right, stars in *Brave New World* at Wolverhampton Grand

of the 100 Best English Language Novels of the 20th Century. The story is set in 2540 and depicts a world where humans are genetically engineered. Family and emotional ties do not exist.

Dawn King's script is witty and forthright, based on a novel that is

more than 80 years old. But Sophie says it is still relevant: "Genetic engineering is very much on the front pages. The commercialisation of everyday life, the assisted dying debate and the legalisation of drugs – all these things were at the forefront of the novel."



*'Most romantic thing I've ever done'*

## So now Paddy is the daddy

TV star and comic Paddy McGuinness will bring his *Daddy McGuinness* show to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre on tonight (Thu) and tomorrow.

The star of ITV's *Take Me Out* returned to his performing roots in September with his first stand-up comedy tour since 2011.

McGuinness, who has enjoyed numerous sell-out tours and best-selling DVDs, said: "I'm really looking forward to being back on tour – I've missed it."

"I've got a great new show planned, *Daddy McGuinness*. Amongst many other things, I'll be sharing several stories about becoming a first-time dad and parenthood."

The host of dating show *Take Me Out* says the most romantic moment of his life was proposing to his wife, Christine Martin, on a Christmas Eve.

"That was definitely the most romantic thing I've ever done," he says.

He doesn't normally go in for grand gestures, however.

"Well, I think the best thing to do is not put yourself under too much pressure. A lot of blokes will put a lot of pressure on themselves to do something amazing."

"There's no point. If you already have the girlfriend, you are already over the line."

"It's the smaller things that work, like running a bath, cooking a meal or renting a nice film. If you start bursting through the front doors on a white stallion with a rose in your teeth she'll burst herself laughing."

### Rock opera and a savage drama

TWO major theatre productions come to Birmingham next week.

Birmingham Hippodrome hosts the new theatre version of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, following the recent stadium-touring revival of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's musical tale of the Messiah and Judas. Glenn Carter takes the title role in the rock opera with Tim Rogers and Judas Iscariot and X Factor finalist Rachel Adedeji as Mary Magdalene.

William Golding's disturbing tale of stranded schoolboys going wild on a desert island, *Lord of the Flies*, has been adapted by Nigel Williams and the Regent's Park production explodes onto the stage at Birmingham Rep.

### Guitar heroes and a pop idol returns

POP gig of the week has to be the return of singer and actor Will Young, back in the lime-light with his latest single *Joy* and new album *85% Proof*.

In concert at the Symphony Hall on Wednesday, the 36-year-old former *Pop Idol* winner is proof that a solid career can come from talent show TV.

Watch out for folk star Seth Lakeman at the Robin 2 in Bilston tonight (Thu); ex-Genesis guitarist Steve Hackett at Symphony Hall tomorrow; guitar great Joe Satriani at Birmingham Town Hall on Monday. Or spend Halloween at the Robin 2 with BlackNBlack, the Swiss girl band tribute to AC/DC.

### Triple bill of dance as Rambert roll in

THREE pieces of dance — one featuring the music of the Rolling Stones — will feature at Birmingham Rep during a four-day visit by acclaimed dance company Rambert, that began last night (Wed).

Rambert will bring the rock 'n' roll swagger of the Rolling Stones to life in *Rooster*, a sharp-suited, snake-hipped celebration of the swinging sixties.

The production will also feature *Frames*, an inventive piece by British dance's hottest property Alexander Whitley, and *Transfigured Night*, a dramatic love story by two-time Olivier-award winning choreographer Kim Brandstrup.

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Michael Watson heads up the Jersey Boys cast

# Oh, what a night as Jersey Boys sets stage for top weekend away

**I'LL be working my way back' to see the phenomenal Jersey Boys again when the musical comes to Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre early next year.**

But for now I'll have to content myself with some great memories of my action-packed Parry's International coach break to the capital, which included tickets for the West End show, a visit to Kew Gardens, afternoon tea at a top London hotel and a tour of the BBC's headquarters at Broadcasting House.

Jersey Boys is based around the lives of 60s pop legends Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons. Their songs are the classics we all grew up with, including Sherry, Big Girls Don't Cry, Walk Like a Man, Rag Doll, Let's Hang On, Bye Bye Baby, Working My Way Back to You and many, many others.

**By Karen Knowles**

We arrived at Piccadilly Theatre in our posh frocks, having just enjoyed afternoon tea at The Waldorf, and settled down to enjoy the show with drinks delivered to our seats through a handy service called Ordertorium. What a great way to beat the queues to the bar. You can either download the free app and place an order on your phone or wave a menu in the air and someone will come and serve you.

## Legendary

Michael Watson has the perfect voice and stature to play Frankie and heads a strong cast. No wonder it has drawn stars like The Hoff and even the legendary Valli himself to see the show. It's a belter.

It had been a busy day. First stop was the world-famous Kew Gardens. Being

on a coach was a bonus because we were dropped at the door which was good because it was raining heavily. Kew is a world leader in plant science and conservation and the sheer size of the place was amazing.

It was too wet for the treetop walkway. Instead we toured the vast site on the Kew Explorer land train.

Our accommodation during our two-night stay was at Tower Hotel which overlooks Tower Bridge from where there are great views of The Shard and the Tower of London and only a two-minute stroll from St Katharine Docks where there are dozens of restaurants, pubs and cafes.

If you like your breaks to be stress-free, coach trips are just the ticket. On our journey from Tower Bridge that morning we were caught up in a jam but the driver's local knowledge meant he did a clever detour and still arrived on schedule. Our final

stop was a tour of the BBC. The sun was shining and I really enjoyed the 45-minute journey through the City and into the West End. The seats were comfortable and panoramic windows provided bird's eye views. Being so high up, it was probably the most I have ever seen of London in one go. We saw where the Great Fire of London started, the Millennium Bridge and St Paul's Cathedral.

The BBC tour includes plenty of fun, hands-on stuff, including the chance to read the news and make a short radio play, complete with sound effects. Through floor length windows we watched journalists at work in the state-of-the-art newsroom and visited The One Show studio, taking it in turns to sit on the famous sofa. We even spotted the odd celebrity, including Fiona Bruce filming outside. It was a fascinating behind-the-scenes tour of a much-loved British institution.

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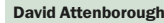
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## DIGITAL



New series. Wildlife series examining the challenges predators face as they stalk their prey, and revealing how it is far more common for hunts to end in failure. The first episode demonstrates how leopards use stealth and concealment to get close to their prey, while African wild dogs have to work as a team. The programme also features footage of killer whales, which rely on their intelligence, Nile crocodiles that can wait years between meals, spiders able to spin 25 foot webs and amur falcons, which travel 16,000 miles every year to hunt insects. Narrated by David Attenborough.

**12.00** Citizen Khan. (R) **12.30** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.35** BBC News.

**12.15** NFL Highlights. Kansas City Chiefs v Detroit Lions. **1.15** Film: The Abominable Snowman. (1957) **2.40** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.35** Holby City. (R) **4.35** This Is BBC Two

**12.15 Jackpot247. 3.00 Motorsport UK. 5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)**

**2.50 Come Dine With Me. (R) 4.40 Food Unwrapped. (R)**

SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **4.00**  
 House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R)

(1971) **1.00** Tooth Fairy (2010) **3.05**  
Sword of Sherwood Forest (1960) **4.40**  
Five Children and It (2004) **6.25** Wall  
Street: Money Never Sleeps (2010) **9.00**  
Friends with Benefits (2011)

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FILM CHOICES

**MONDAY**  
**Deadly Revenge, Channel 5, 3.15pm**  
A woman starts a relationship with a seemingly perfect man who has an intense relationship with his mother. She discovers his only previous girlfriend died mysteriously, and becomes consumed with paranoia as she investigates what became of her. Thriller, starring Alicia Ziegler and Donna Mills. (2013)

**TUESDAY**  
**Blackthorn, BBC1, 11.45pm**  
Butch Cassidy lives in secluded exile in a remote Bolivian village, having survived his supposed last stand. After years away from home, he decides the time has come to return to his family in America, but on the way, he runs into an ambitious young outlaw and is drawn into one last criminal adventure. Western, starring Sam Shepard. (2011)



Erased, Thursday, Channel 5, 10pm

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Thirteen Days, BBC1, 11.35pm**  
Fact-based drama covering the events of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, when the US and Soviet Union confronted each other with nuclear arsenals primed. An American spy plane observes the Russians installing ballistic missiles in Cuba – and over the next 13 days mind games are played out in Washington amid unbearable tension, as President Kennedy comes into conflict with the warmongering military. Starring Kevin Costner and Bruce Greenwood. (2000)

**THURSDAY**  
**Erased, Channel 5, 10pm**  
Premiere. An ex-CIA operative discovers his former employers want him dead, and have erased all records of his existence. Action thriller, with Aaron Eckhart and Olga Kurylenko. (2012)

**FRIDAY**  
**Cemetery Junction, BBC1, 11.50pm**  
A young man in 1970s Reading starts to question what he wants out of life, but finds his friends happy with their lot. He starts a new job selling insurance door to door, only to run into an old girlfriend – who he learns is the daughter of his new boss and engaged to the co-worker showing him the ropes. Comedy drama, starring Christian Cooke. (2010)



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Joanna is All Shook Up in her personal journey

If he had lived, Elvis Presley would now be 80 years old.

It may be hard to picture the King as an octogenarian, but his fans do have plenty of other iconic images to remember him by. Some will always see him as the young, swivel-hipped rocker who took audiences by storm in the 1950s, while others picture the leather-clad veteran of the '68 comeback special, or the showman of the Vegas years.

For Joanna Lumley, who has been a loyal subject of the King ever since she bought a copy of Hound Dog, his look was part of his enduring appeal, and has even been an influence on one of her own most famous performances.

She says: "The thing about being a fan of Elvis is that you just love everything about him. I loved the way he looked, the way he sang, the way he dressed, the photographs of him, the way he performed on stage...and I loved his smile and his sense of humour."

"I love the fact that he never really grinned huge cheesy grins, he had a special Elvis grin, and I borrowed that for Patsy in Absolutely Fabulous...a little tribute to Elvis."

But now she is on a mission to put aside her own image of him and get to the truth behind the legend.

She explains: "My Elvis was this young one, before the jumpsuits and the big lifestyle. But what was he really like? If my dream had come true and he had come over to England and I had met him, I wonder would I have liked the boy buried underneath the myth? I'm going in search of the youth catapulted to fame and fortune."

As you might expect, it's a journey that takes in a trip to his home, Graceland, where she receives a personal tour from Elvis's ex-wife, Priscilla Presley.

Joanna says: "The TV room, the living room, Elvis's jungle-themed den, are virtually untouched. His mother's bedroom is still as it was.

It's open to the public, but tonight, Priscilla and I will be alone, with her memories."

However, the presenter soon discovers that Graceland is very different from the rocker's first home, as she visits a shack that his father, Vernon, built for the family in Tupelo, Mississippi. "They were dirt poor," Joanna points out. "It's extraordinary to think that this was where he was born."

There will be more revelations as she talks to his family and friends, charts his rise to fame, and pays a visit to legendary Sun Studios, where he made his first ground-breaking recordings. She also learns more about how his fans and those close to him reacted to his tragic death in 1977.

While Joanna will never get to meet the man himself, she discovers that his legacy does live on, as she calls in on another famous studio, Abbey Road, where a 'new' Elvis album is being made.



Joanna Lumley, Elvis and Me, Wednesday, ITV, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

**MONDAY**  
**Simply Nigella BBC2, 8.30pm**  
Fed up with a cereal for breakfast? Then chances are you need to spice up the most important meal of the day with a little inspiration. Try avocado toast with radishes instead. Yes, it might sound a little out there, but as Nigella Lawson proves in this new series, anything goes when it comes to making tasty and original dishes. The journalist and presenter reveals that what people cook and how they prepare it really can make them feel better and more alive. Also on the menu this week is a Thai noodle dish with cinnamon and prawns, and a laid-back family supper of seeded lamb ribs, served with a feta and avocado salad. And if that leaves you hungry for more, she will also be whipping up warm-spiced cauliflowers and chicksalad as well as an apricot almond cake. Bon appetit.

**TUESDAY**  
**The Great Pottery Throw Down BBC2, 9pm**  
New series. Sara Cox invites 10 home pottery enthusiasts to gather in Stoke-on-Trent, where they take part in a competitive throwing contest to determine which of them should be named Top Potter. Through a series of 18 challenges, taking

place over the course of 35 days, the competitors will be judged on their craft skills and creativity by ceramic artist Kate Malone and master potter Keith Brymer Jones. The competition gets under way as the amateurs take part in a four-day assignment, in which they must produce a set of stackable kitchen bowls from lumps of earthenware clay. They also face a Spot Test, in which they must attach handles to 20 mugs within a strict time limit, and a Throw Down, where the judges ask them to make as many egg-cups as they can within 20 minutes.

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Dominic Sandbrook: Let Us Entertain You BBC2, 9pm**  
New series. Dominic Sandbrook explores British post-war culture, arguing that although it is indebted to the Victorian past, it is a crucial part of modern identity. In the first edition, Dominic examines the way in which culture has become one of Britain's newest exports, claiming that it is an industry in itself, in the same way as shipbuilding and textile production. He suggests that cultural revolution has occurred in the old industrial regions, taking influence from

the former connections of the Empire, as well as the global cultural capital, London.

**My Psychic Life Channel 4, 10pm**  
Documentary following psychic mediums in the north of England, who reveal what life is like for those who claim they can talk to the dead.

Reports suggest that one in three British people have visited a clairvoyant or medium, with believers claiming it offers them solace, and others insisting it is hocus pocus.

In terms of business, romance, or simply a trip to the shops, the programme explores whether life is made any easier – or indeed more complicated – by having a supposed direct line to the spirit world.



Simply Nigella, Monday, BBC2, 8.30pm

**THURSDAY**  
**George Clarke's Amazing Spaces Channel 4, 8pm**  
If you were hoping to see the last in the current run a week ago, then the scheduling folks decided to prolong the agony a little longer. Now we finally get to see the series finale, in which the amiable host meets a father and daughter who are turning an American school bus into a festival campervan. He also heads off to Germany to meet a young dad who has turned a grain silo into a home. However, the question on many a fan's lips is: will George and Will's floating beach hut work? After months of construction work, the moment of truth finally arrives as it is launched onto the open sea. However, Will has come up with a contingency plan just in case; he has added an escape pod made from an old bath.

**FRIDAY**  
**Ice Road Truckers Channel 5, 8pm**  
The drivers for trucking companies VP Express and Polar Industries are put to the test when the winter presents an even bigger adversary – the Polar Vortex, bringing with it the worst winter conditions in a century. With the storm due, Lisa Kelly and Darrell Ward return to lead team Polar to victory.

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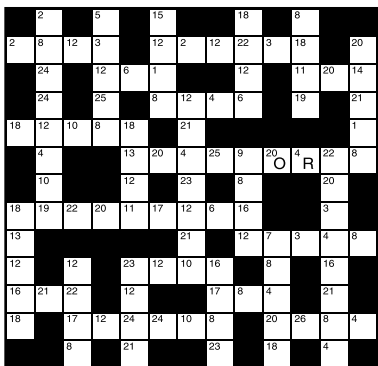
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BRAIN GYM No.349

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

H O A P J U Y Z N G T S X  
W I D Q F L K V B M R E C



Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

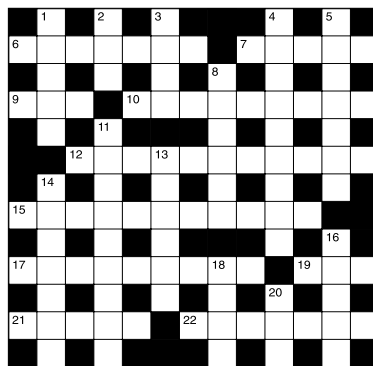
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 6. Had pretensions to 22 (7)
- 7. It is in use irregularly, this set of rooms (5)
- 9. Also part of 12 (3)
- 10. Looking for resemblance of equality in advent (9)
- 12. Surreptitious when short of labour? (11)
- 15. Tries pair on to correct breathing (11)
- 17. Given lodgings divided into four (9)
- 19. Injure animal by turning it round (3)
- 21. The first doctor makes a dull humming noise (5)
- 22. About 100 average in doctoring (7)

Down

- 1. Evidence of growing industry? (5)
- 2. The drink 19 needs at the border (3)
- 3. Some hope South American coin will answer (4)
- 4. Security man? (9)
- 5. Stupefy Edward by being dwarfish (7)
- 8. Firing into the air as a result (6)
- 11. Taking the air with a lively result? (9)
- 13. Deservedly got wages (6)
- 14. Need again a quantity of paper (7)
- 16. Graduate gets song from an Asian (5)
- 18. Moreover not at all rough (4)
- 20. Bird is fashioned by 19 with this metal (3)



Quick Clues:

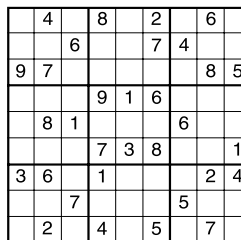
Across

- 6. Burdensome (7)
- 7. Daub (5)
- 9. Dandy (3)
- 10. Inactive (9)
- 12. Blessing (11)
- 15. Ancestor (11)
- 17. In want (9)
- 19. Play upon words (3)
- 21. Giver (5)
- 22. Beguile (7)

Down

- 1. Bequeath (5)
- 2. Attempt (3)
- 3. Certain (4)
- 4. Copy (9)
- 5. Soldier (7)
- 8. Negligent (6)
- 11. Translation (9)
- 13. Stimulate (6)
- 14. Liberty (7)
- 16. Bland (5)
- 18. Row (4)
- 20. Ocean (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

8	1	2	4	5	9	6	3	7
3	5	6	1	8	7	4	9	2
4	7	9	3	6	2	8	5	1
5	6	1	9	2	4	3	7	6
9	6	4	5	7	3	2	1	8
2	3	7	6	1	8	5	4	9
6	4	8	7	3	1	9	2	5
7	9	5	2	4	6	1	8	3
1	2	3	8	9	5	7	6	4

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Indisposition; 8 Pharisee; 9 Less; 10 Presto; 12 Tangle; 14 Innate; 16 Sanity; 18 Peer; 20 Sighting; 22 Bird's-eye views. Down: 1 On the run; 2 Mitres; 3 Opus; 4 Asbestos; 5 Stolen; 6 Dons; 11 Overseer; 13 Late news; 15 Abrade; 17 Nitwit; 19 Emit; 21 Glee. QUICK - Across: 7 House-breaking; 8 Defender; 9 Wage; 10 Cattle; 12 Onrush; 14 Step up; 16 Tidbit; 18 Spur; 20 Upheaval; 22 Inadvertently. Down: 1 Forecast; 2 Ascend; 3 Abed; 4 Reamost; 5 Skewer; 6 Snag; 11 Espoused; 13 Suittable; 15 Parade; 17 Drains; 19 Pang; 21 Hate.

Thinking space

Quiz

- 1. What are the international vehicle registration letters for Finland?
- 2. Which vegetable's scientific name is Nasturtium officinale?
- 3. What is the nickname of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 3 in D?
- 4. In which year was the first walk in space?
- 5. On which river does Strasbourg stand?
- 6. What is androphobia?
- 7. What instrument do you associate with Jack Teagarden?
- 8. On which river is the Kariba dam?
- 9. What is the alter ego of cartoon character Wonder Woman?
- 10. In what year was Dr. Crippen executed?

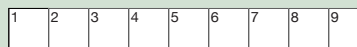
Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Under consideration; 2 Bolivar; 3 William H. Harrison; 4 Ur; 5 The Lake Poets; 6 1805; 7 The dog-star; 8 An oriental tobacco pipe; 9 New South Wales; 10 Oedipus. Niner: JUBILANCE

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

45295236 gives a girl's name,  
3271 gives a boy's name,  
5885 gives a girl's name.



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# Immaculate family home is set over three floors



**IMMACULATELY** presented, this much-improved three-storey double-fronted detached in Bransdale Road, Clayhanger, Brownhills, lies on a sought after development.

It is for sale through Goodchilds at £275,000.

It has an ample block-paved driveway, an entrance hall with parquet flooring, a guest WC, a kitchen/diner.

There is a lounge with French doors and a living-flame gas fire, a playroom/study, master bedroom suite that was previously two bedrooms with an en suite and walk-in dressing area, two further first-floor bedrooms and a refitted bathroom with a three-piece white suite, two second-floor bedrooms and a rear garden with a metal workshop. Contact Goodchilds on 01543 226655 or visit [www.goodchilds-uk.com](http://www.goodchilds-uk.com)



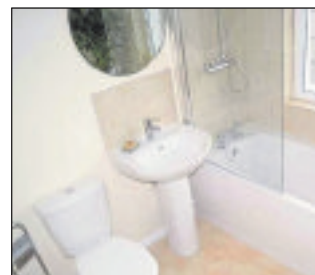
## A blend of old and new features inside

**BEAUTIFULLY** presented and recently refurbished, 172 Windsor Avenue, Penn, Wolverhampton, is a traditional style semi-detached home having a fine blend of original features and contemporary fittings.

It is for sale through Sanders Wright & Freeman at £175,000 with no chain.

The property comprises a reception hall, front living room, rear dining room, refitted breakfast kitchen with a breakfast bar, a spacious pantry, utility room, three double bedrooms and refitted family bathroom.

A driveway provides off-road parking to the front and side and there are pleasant gardens. Contact Sanders Wright & Freeman on 01902 575555 or visit [www.swf-estateagents.co.uk](http://www.swf-estateagents.co.uk)



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**EPC: D**

**PARK AVENUE, ROWLEY REGIS**

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- Front & Rear Gardens

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**EPC: F**

**BORNEO STREET, WALSALL**

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- Downstairs Bathroom
- GCH, Double Glazing

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**EPC: C**

**STANLEY PLACE, RUSHALL**

- Mid-Terraced House
- Three Bedrooms
- Hallway, Lounge
- Dining Room
- Kitchen, Bathroom
- GCH, UPVC DG

**£550pcm - plus fees**

**EPC: F**

**KING GEORGE CRESCENT, RUSHALL**

- Three Bed Semi
- Two Reception Rooms
- Kitchen & Downstairs WC
- Bathroom
- DG & GCH
- Gardens & Driveway

**£525pcm - plus fees**

**EPC: C**

**LEIGH COURT, WALSALL**

- Ground Floor Flat
- Two Bedrooms
- Lounge & Kitchen
- Bathroom & Parking
- UPVC DG & GCH
- Communal Gardens

**£495pcm - plus fees**

**EPC: D**

**COPPICE ROAD, WALSALL**

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- Lounge & Dining Room
- Kitchen & Bathroom
- GCH & UPVC DG
- Parking To Side
- Front & Rear Garden

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**EPC: F**

**WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD, BLOXWICH**

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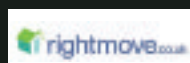
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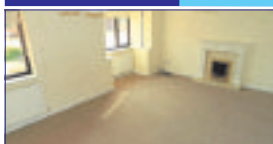
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• £69,950  
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• Kitchen, EPC - D  
OFFERS AROUND:  
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**Lakeside Close Willenhall** **REDUCED**



• Modern 3 bedroom detached house  
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• Dining room  
• EPC - D, Kitchen  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£180,000**

**Compton Road Wolverhampton** **NEW**



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**Upper Ettingshall Road Bilston**



• Detached Residence with No Upward Chain  
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• Reception Hall • Guest WC  
• EPC Rating D, Lounge & Dining Room  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£160,000**

**Sarah Close Bilston**



• Modern Terraced House  
• Ideal first time purchase  
• Two Bedrooms  
• EPC Rating - C, Kitchen  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£94,950**

**Hartland Avenue Bilston**



• End of terrace house  
• Ideal First Time purchase  
• Two Bedrooms  
• EPC Rating - D, Lounge  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£100,000**

**Tameside Close Willenhall** **NEW**



• 50% Shared ownership offers over £63,000  
• 3 Bedroom semi detached house  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£63,000**

**Cresswell Crescent Walsall** **NEW**



• 2 Bedroom end terraced house  
• No upward chain  
• Corner plot  
• Lounge  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£74,950**

**Main Street Walsall** **NEW**



• Grade 2 Listed detached cottage  
• Refurbishment required  
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• Extending garden  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£400,000**

**Tarn Close Willenhall** **REDUCED**



• 3 Bedroom end terrace house  
• New Build  
• Double glazing  
• Central heating  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£160,000**

**Williams Close Willenhall** **REDUCED**



• Semi Detached Residence with No Upward Chain  
• UPVC Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating  
• Entrance Hallway  
• EPC Rating D, L Shaped Lounge  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£130,000**

**Martin Drive Willenhall** **REDUCED**



• Semi Detached Residence with No Upward Chain  
• UPVC Double Glazing (where specified) Gas Central Heating  
• Reception Hall  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£120,000**

**Granville Street Willenhall** **NEW**



• 2 Bedroom end terrace modern house  
• Former show home  
• Lounge  
• EPC - C, Kitchen  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£127,000**

**Grosvenor Road Wolverhampton**



• Recently Refurbished 'Mucklow' Style Semi Detached Property  
• Three Bedrooms  
• Lounge  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£186,950**

**Loxdale Sidings Bilston**



• Ground Floor Flat  
• Ideal investment opportunity  
• One Bedroom  
• EPC Rating - C, Kitchen  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£60,000**

**Beckett Street Bilston**



• Middle Terrace Residence - No Upward chain  
• Ideal for First Time buyers & Investors  
• UPVC Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating  
• EPC Rating C, Lounge  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£74,950**

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the estate agent

**Hallgreen Street Bilston**



• Spacious Second floor flat  
• Fantastic investment opportunity earning up to around 9% yield  
• Three Bedrooms  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£67,500**

**Newbolt Road Bilston**



• Middle Terrace Residence  
• Gas Central Heating & UPVC Double Glazing  
• Reception Hall  
• EPC TBC, Lounge  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£90,000**

**Constantine Way Bilston**



• Immaculate Detached Residence on the popular Bridgefields Estate  
• UPVC Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating  
• Reception Hall • Guest Cloakroom  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£169,995**

**Moseley Road Bilston**



• Semi Detached Residence Requiring some Modernisation  
• UPVC Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating  
• Reception Hall  
OFFERS AROUND:  
Viewing: **£110,000**



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### BENTLEY QUEEN ELIZABETH AVENUE

- Exceptional Extended 3 Bedrooms Semi Detached
- Hall, Lounge
- Dining Room
- Conservatory
- Breakfast Kitchen, Utility
- Bathroom
- Double Glazing, Gas CH
- Garage, Large Driveway



**OFFERS OVER £145,000**



### BENTLEY MORRIS AVENUE

- Impressively Appointed 3 Bedrooms Semi Detached
- Hall, Lounge
- Dining Room
- Kitchen, Study, Shower Room
- Conservatory, Bathroom
- Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- Driveway ● Large Rear Gardens



**OFFERS OVER £140,000**



### NEW INVENTION DORCHESTER ROAD

- Stunning 2 Bedrooms Mid Terrace
- Garage
- Hall, Lounge, Dining Room
- Conservatory



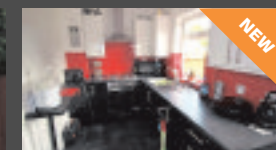
- Impressive Refitted Kitchen
- Luxury Bathroom
- Double Glazing, Gas CH
- Driveway, Gardens

**£110,000**



### WILLENHALL VAUGHAN ROAD

- Improved Semi Detached Property
- Hall, Lounge
- Re-fitted Kitchen, Utility
- Re-fitted Bathroom



- Three Good Size Bedrooms
- Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- Large Gardens

**£110,000**



### WILLENHALL SANDBEDS ROAD

- Extensive 6 Bedrooms Family Property
- Four Reception Rooms
- Impressive Re-fitted Kitchen
- Bathroom ● En-Suite ● Shower Room
- Two Garages ● Block Paved Drive ● Large Gardens

**£314,950**



### WILLENHALL BILSTON LANE

- Greatly Extended 4 Bedroom Detached Bungalow
- Generous Plot with Development Potential STPP
- Double Glazing ● Gas CH ● Gardens
- Driveway, Gardens

**£265,000**



### WILLENHALL RAVENSCROFT ROAD

- Impressive 3 Bedroom Detached
- Lounge
- Dining Room
- Spacious Kitchen/diner



- Utility Room With Wc
- Bathroom, En-suite
- Two Garages
- Large Corner Plot, Gardens

**£235,000**



### WILLENHALL DOVEDALE AVENUE

- Traditional 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- Hall, Lounge
- Conservatory
- Re-fitted Kitchen, Bathroom
- Majority Double Glazing
- Gas CH, Garage
- Driveway
- Large Rear Gardens
- No Chain



**£132,950**



### WILLENHALL BIRCHFIELDS ROAD

- Well Presented 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- Extended Kitchen ● Two Reception Rooms
- Bathroom ● En-Suite ● Shower Room
- Pleasant Garden ● Driveway ● NO CHAIN

**£220,000**



### SUMMER HAYES COLLERS CLOSE

- Superb Improved 3 Bedroom Detached Bungalow
- Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen ● Re-fitted Bathroom
- Double Glazing ● Gas CH ● Gardens
- 20ft Garage ● Block Paved Driveway

**£175,000**



### ESSINGTON SNEYD LANE

- Traditional Semi on Premier Road
- Excellent Size 3 Bedrooms Semi Detached
- Conservatory ● Two Large Bedrooms
- Loft Bedroom ● Impressive Bathroom ● Gardens

**£185,000**



### SNEYD PARK BROCKERIDGE CLOSE

- Impressive 3 Bedrooms Semi Detached
- Lounge ● Dining Room ● Extended Fitted Kitchen
- Garage & Driveway ● Gas CH ● Double Glazing
- Rear Gardens ● No Chain

**£160,000**



### WILLENHALL ROEBUCK GLADE

- Spacious 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- Hall, Lounge ● Dining Kitchen
- Bathroom ● Double Glazing ● Gas CH
- Front And Rear Gardens, Garage, Driveway

**£149,950**



### NEW INVENTION MENAI CLOSE

- Improved 3 Bedrooms Semi Detached
- Double Glazing ● Gas Central Heating System
- Hall, Through Lounge / Dining Room
- Re-fitted Kitchen, Bathroom, Driveway, Gardens

**£140,000**



### COUNTY BRIDGE DEVON ROAD

- Improved Traditional Bay Fronted Semi Detached
- Hall, Lounge, Excellent Dining Kitchen
- Three Bedrooms, Re-fitted Shower Room
- Garage, Driveway, Rear Gardens, No Chain

**£123,500**



### WILLENHALL WOLVERHAMPTON RD WEST

- Superb Modern Style 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- Hall ● Lounge ● Dining Kitchen
- Re-fitted Bathroom ● Double Glazing ● Gas CH
- Two Allocated Parking Spaces ● Gardens

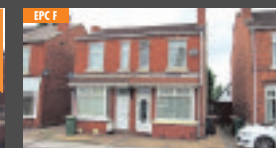
**£120,000**



### BENTLEY ALEXANDER ROAD

- Excellent Size 3 Bedrooms Semi Detached
- Occupying A Corner Position
- Hall, Spacious Lounge ● Kitchen, Large Utility
- Bathroom, Separate Wc ● Gardens

**£110,000**



### WILLENHALL ASHMORE LAKE ROAD

- Well Presented Semi Detached Property
- Two Reception Rooms ● Impressive Kitchen
- 2 Large Bedrooms ● Superb Bathroom
- Double Glazing ● Gas CH ● Excellent Gardens

**£105,000**



### WILLENHALL RUGELEY AVENUE

- Much Improved 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- Hall, Lounge / Dining Room, Re-fitted Kitchen
- Utility, Bathroom, Double Glazing, Gas CH
- Driveway, Large Garden

**£105,000**



### WILLENHALL BRICK KILN STREET

- Well Presented Semi Detached Property
- Hall, Lounge, Large Kitchen, G Floor Bathroom
- Three Bedrooms, Gas Central Heating System
- Double Glazing, Driveway, Rear Gardens

**OFFERS OVER £100,000**



### WILLENHALL LEVESON STREET

- Excellent Size Period Mid Terrace Property
- Hall, 2 Reception Rooms ● Large Kitchen, Utility Room
- Two Double Bedrooms ● Spacious Bathroom
- Double Glazing ● Gas CH, Rear Gardens

**£85,000**



### SHORT HEATH POOLES LANE

- Period Two Bedroom Mid Terrace Property
- Two Reception Rooms
- Extended Kitchen
- Bathroom



- Double Glazing
- Gas CH
- Pleasant Rear Gardens
- No Upward Chain

**£99,000**



### NEW INVENTION SQUIRES GROVE

- Well Presented Ground Floor Apartment
- Hall
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen

**£90,000 (FOR FULL 100% SHARE) (£63,000 FOR 70% SHARE AVAILABLE)**



- Two Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- En-suite Shower Rm
- Allocated Parking Space



### WILLENHALL HOLMAN CLOSE

- Much Improved Ground Floor Maisonette
- Hall, Lounge, Kitchen ● Double Bedroom
- Bathroom, Double Glaz ● Warm Air Heating
- Long Lease ● No Upward Chain

**OFFERS OVER £50,000**



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- Residential, Office, Nursery uses
- Site area 0.18 ha (0.46 acre)

BK Code:2939

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BELIEVED to date back to the 1600s, The Manor House, Seisdon Road, Trysull, Wolverhampton, is a listed house which was heavily influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement – similar to the nearby Wightwick Manor.

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Around 30 years ago, The Manor was divided from the East Wing and forms a separate title.

It features a reception hall, dining room, study, family room, kitchen/breakfast room with Aga, downstairs shower room, cellars, drawing room, conservatory, five bedrooms, three bathrooms, a priest hole, along with an attic.

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## WILLENHALL



**LOWRY CLOSE, WILLENHALL**  
Two Bed End Town House Comprises Of Entrance Hallway, Spacious Kitchen/ Diner, Lounge And Shower Room. The Property Also Benefits From Gas Central Heating, Majority UPVC Double Glazing And Private Rear Garden.

£75,000

## WILLENHALL



**PINSON RD, WILLENHALL**  
Three Bed Mid Town House Having Lounge, Separate Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom, D/Glazing, Part C/ Heating, Generous Rear Garden. Ideal FTB Or BTL.

£79,995

## DARLASTON



**HERBERTS PK RD, DARLASTON**  
Two Bed Mid Town House Having Porch, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor W.C, Verandah, Utility, Family Bathroom, C/ Heating, Majority D/ Glazing, Front And Rear Gardens. Ideal BTL Or FTB

£80,000



**SLATER ST, WILLENHALL**  
Three Bed End Town House Having Lounge, Modern Fitted Kitchen With Appliances, Downstairs W.C, Conservatory, Family Bathroom With Shower, D/ Glazing, C/Heating, Off Road Parking.

£84,995

## BEECHDALE



**NAPIER RD, WALSALL**  
Refurbished Three Bed Town House Comprises Of Dining Room, Rear Lounge, Fitted Kitchen With Integrated Appliances, Bathroom & Separate W/C. UPVC D/Glazing, C/ Heating And Private Rear Garden.

£94,995

## WILLENHALL



**HARPER ST, WILLENHALL**  
Two Bed Mid-Town House Comprises Of Spacious Entrance Hall, Modern Fitted Kitchen With Integrated Oven And Hob, Ground Floor W/C, Good Sized Lounge, Family Bathroom With Shower, D/G, C/H.

£99,995

## WILLENHALL



**BLOXWICH RD SOUTH, W-HALL**  
Two Bed Semi Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen/Diner, Family Bathroom, UPVC Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Front & Rear Garden & Driveway.

£100,000

## BENTLEY



**EDINBURGH AVE, WALSALL**  
Two Bed Semi. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge/Diner, Kitchen & Ground Floor W.C, 1st Floor Bathroom. D/G & G/C/H. Off Road Parking To The Front & Enclosed Garden To The Rear.

£110,000

## SHORT HEATH



**SHERLOCK CLOSE, WILLENHALL**  
Well Presented Two Bed End Townhouse. Comprises Entrance Hall, Kitchen, Spacious Lounge, Conservatory, Bathroom, D/G, G/CH, Parking To The Fore, Enclosed Garden To The Rear.

£119,950

## BUSHBURY



**SHERBOURNE RD, W-TON**  
Extended Three Bed Semi Having Entrance Hallway, Sitting Room, Extended Lounge/ Diner, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor Shower Room, Family Bathroom, D/G, C/H, Summer House, Driveway.

£119,995

## WILLENHALL



**BIRCHES RISE, WILLENHALL**  
Three Bed Mid Town House. Comprises Of Entrance Porch, Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen/Diner And Family Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. Gardens To Front & Rear. Allocated Off Road Parking Space. VIEWING ADVISED!

O.I.R.O £120,000

## ASHMORE LAKE



**ASHMORE LAKE RD, W-HALL**  
Three Bed Semi Comprises Of Entrance Porch, Dining Room, Reception Room, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor W.C, Family Bathroom, D/Glazing & C/ Heating Throughout, Generous Rear Garden.

£124,995

## BRACKENDALE ESTATE



**STROUD AVENUE, WILLENHALL**  
Three Bed Mid Town House Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Refitted Kitchen, Lounge, Conservatory And Ground Floor WC, Family Bathroom. UPVC Double Glazing And Gas Central Heating. Garage To The Rear.

£124,995

## NEW INVENTION



**CONWAY CRES, WILLENHALL**  
Three Bed Semi Having Entrance Porch, Inner Hallway, Through Lounge/Diner, Play Room/Study, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor W.C, Family Bathroom, UPVC D/G, Gas C/H, Garage.

£129,995

## BENTLEY



**W-TON RD WEST, WALSALL**  
Traditional Three Bed Semi Having Entrance Hall, Spacious Lounge/ Diner, Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom, UPVC D/Glazing, Gas C/Heating, Garage, Driveway, Garden With A Brick Built Detached Summer House.

£138,995

## PORTOBELLO



**DILLOWAYS LANE, W-HALL**  
Two, Two Bedroom Self Contained Flats Both Having Hallway, Lounge, Fitted kitchen And Family Shower Room. Both Flats Also Benefit From D/Glazing & C/ Heating.

£139,995

## WILLENHALL



**HARROWBY PLACE, W-HALL**  
Three Bed Semi Comprises Of Entrance Hallway, Lounge/Diner, Conservatory, Fitted Kitchen, Re-Fitted Shower Room. The Property Also Benefits From Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating Throughout.

£139,995

## KINGFISHER ESTATE



**WELLAND GROVE, W-HALL**  
Three Bedroom Detached Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom. D/ Glazed, G/C/H. Gardens To Front & Rear, Driveway & Garage.

£145,995

## FURZEBANK



**PINENEEDLE CROFT, W-HALL**  
Extended Three Bed Semi Detached Bungalow Which Comprises Of Entrance Hallway, Good Sized Lounge/ Dining Area, Fitted Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Shower Room, D/Glazing, C/ Heating, Driveway & Private Rear Garden.

£169,950

## WILLENHALL



**BILSTON LANE, WILLENHALL**  
Three Bed Detached. Comprises Of Porch, Hall, Guest W.C, Lounge, Spacious Kitchen/ Diner, Veranda & Family Bathroom. Maj D/G. G/C/H. Garden To Fore. O/R/P. Extensive Gardens To Rear.

£185,000

## SHORT HEATH



**WALKERS FOLD, W-HALL**  
Four Bed Detached Comprises Of Lounge, Dining Room, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Separate Utility, Ground Floor W.C, En-suite, Refitted Family Bathroom, D/ Glazing, C/Heating And Integral Garage. MUST BE VIEWED.

£219,995

## SHORT HEATH



**BLOXWICH RD NTH, W-HALL**  
Detached Three Bed Having Entrance Porch, Hall, Lounge With Inglenook Fireplace, Separate Sitting Room, Conservatory, Fitted Kitchen, Galleried Landing, Family Bathroom, Garage, D/Glazing, C/ Heating.

£260,000

## SHORT HEATH



**BLOXWICH ROAD NORTH, W-HALL**  
Superb Spacious 3/4 Bed Detached Bungalow, Lounge, Impressive Fitted Kitchen, Utility, Family Bathroom, Conservatory, D/G & C/H, Detached Garage, Suitable For Disabled Living. MUST VIEW.

£285,000

## MUST VIEW



**CRAB LANE, WILLENHALL**  
Prestigious Extended Four Bed Detached Having Lounge, Sitting Room, Dining Kitchen, Conservatory, Utility, Galleried Landing, Master With En-Suite, Family Bathroom, Garage, Substantial Plot.

£365,000

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**Walsall Road, Walsall Wood**

- Superbly Designed Detached Bungalow
- Set on 0.8 Acre Plot
- Three Bedrooms all having En-Suites
- Grand Entrance Hallway
- Lounge with Inglenook Fireplace
- Fitted Kitchen

Offers in the Region Of £450,000



**Sneyd Lane, Essington**

- Ample Parking to the Fore
- Welcoming Entrance Hallway
- 38ft Living Area
- Open Plan Kitchen/Diner
- Conservatory
- Utility Room

Guide Price £400,000



**Curlew Drive, Brownhills**

- No Upward Chain
- Impressive David Wilson Home
- Sought After Development
- Bespoke Fitted Kitchen
- Superb Conservatory
- Detached Double Garage

£379,950



**Nutmeg Grove, Walsall**

- Impressive Detached Residence
- Double Detached Garage
- Sought After Development Close To Walsall Town Centre
- Close Proximity To Popular Schools
- Superb Kitchen/Diner

Offers in the Region Of £374,995



**Shire Lea, Shire Oak**

- Four Bed Detached Dormer Bungalow
- Guest Cloakroom
- Spacious Lounge
- Refitted Breakfast Kitchen
- Family Bathroom
- Spacious Lounge

£300,000



**Bransdale Road, Clayhanger**

- IMPOSING DETACHED THREE-STOREY
- FIVE BEDROOMS
- IMPRESSIVE MASTER SUITE
- SUPERB KITCHEN/DINER
- DELIGHTFUL REAR GARDEN
- SOUGHT AFTER LOCATION

£275,000



**Nutmeg Grove, Walsall**

- Superbly Extended Detached Home
- Impressive Extended Kitchen
- Secure Parking to the Rear
- Garage & Off Road Parking to the Front
- Five Generous Bedrooms
- En-Suite to Master Bedroom

Offers in the Region Of £269,950



**Tannery Court, Walsall**

- Brand New Three Storey Property
- 10 Year NHBC Warranty
- Garage
- New Development in the Heart Of Walsall
- Lounge with Inglenook Fireplace
- Show Home Available to View

Offers in the Region Of £210,000



**Meadow Street, Walsall Town**

- IMPOSING THREE STOREY NEW BUILD
- FOUR BEDROOMS
- TWO EN-SUITE
- KITCHEN/DINER
- LOUNGE
- FRONT & REAR GARDENS

Guide Price £200,000



**Lincoln Road, Walsall**

- Much Extended & Improved Property
- Two Storey Rear Extension
- Delightful Rear Garden
- Block Paved Driveway
- Three Double Bedrooms
- Near To Walsall Arboretum

Offers In Excess Of £200,000



**Norton Road, Pelsall**

- Superbly Appointed Link Detached Bungalow
- Three Bedrooms
- Kitchen/Diner
- Bathroom
- Lounge

Offers in the Region Of £199,995



**Ashtree Road, Pelsall**

- Three Storey Three Bedroom Period Property
- Sympathetically Refurbished
- Superb Kitchen/Conservatory
- Master Bedroom with En-Suite
- Many Original Features

Offers in Excess Of £190,000



**Prince Street, Walsall**

- No Upward Chain
- Double Garage
- Extended Breakfast Kitchen
- Spacious Through Lounge
- Recently Fitted Worcester Combi Boiler
- Corner Plot

Offers in the Region Of £190,000



**Vernon Way, Bloxwich**

- Two/Three Bedroom Detached Bungalow
- One/Two Reception Rooms
- Fully Fitted Kitchen
- Ground Floor Bathroom
- Master Bedroom with En-Suite Shower Room

Offers in the Region Of £180,000



**Waters Keep, Walsall, Bloxwich**

- Light and Airy Lounge
- Spacious Kitchen / Diner
- Downstairs W.C
- Rear French Doors
- Four Generous Bedrooms
- En-suite to Master Bedroom

£159,995



**Mayfields Drive, Brownhills**

- Extended Modern Family Home
- Sought After Cul-De-Sac Location
- Superb Refitted Breakfast Kitchen
- Lounge
- Dining Area
- Refitted Family Bathroom

£155,000



**Bloxwich Road, Bloxwich**

- No Upward Chain
- Four Bedrooms (En-Suite to Master)
- Two Reception Rooms
- Off Road Parking
- Car Port & Side Access to Rear Garden
- Gas Central Heating & Double Glazing

£150,000



**Greenfields Road, Shelfield**

- No Upward Chain
- Refitted Kitchen
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Off Road Parking
- Garage

Offers in the Region Of £145,000



**Waters Keep, Walsall, Bloxwich**

- Light and Airy Lounge
- Spacious Kitchen/Diner
- Downstairs W.C
- Rear French Doors
- Three Spacious Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom

£143,995



**Lichfield Road, Bloxwich**

- Beautifully Presented
- Many Original Features
- Luxurious Bathroom
- Refitted Kitchen
- Delightful Rear Garden
- Off Road Parking

Offers in the Region Of £140,000



**Waters Keep, Walsall, Bloxwich**

- Light and Airy Lounge
- Spacious Kitchen / Diner
- Downstairs W.C
- Rear French Doors
- Three Spacious Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom

£136,995



**Dartford Road, Dudley Fields**

- Superbly Presented & Extended Semi-Detached
- Block Paved Driveway
- Porch
- Ground Floor WC
- Laundry Room

Offers in the Region Of £125,000



**Hunter Crescent, Bloxwich**

- Superbly Extended Semi-Detached
- Pleasant Lounge
- Extended Breakfast Kitchen
- Refitted Bathroom
- Three Bedrooms
- Off Road Parking

Offers in the Region Of £125,000



**Yorkshire Grove, Leamore**

- Immaculately Presented
- Modern Semi Detached
- Sought After Jubilee Gardens Development
- Guest Cloakroom
- Open Plan Kitchen/Living Room

Offers in Excess Of £125,000



**Coxmoor Close, Bloxwich**

- Suitable Buy-to-Let
- Refitted Kitchen
- Great First Purchase
- Immaculately Presented
- Refitted Kitchen/Diner
- Refitted Bathroom
- Off Road Parking

Offers in Excess Of £125,000



**NEW**

**Stretton Road, Willenhall**

- Lounge with Oak Fireplace and Log Burner
- 19FT Kitchen/Diner
- Laundry Room and Guest WC
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Refitted Bathroom
- Loft Space and Velux window
- Gated Driveway
- Child Friendly Rear Garden

£120,000



**Deepmore Avenue, Reedswood**

- No Upward Chain
- Corner Plot
- Off Road Parking
- Refitted Bathroom
- Modern Kitchen
- Ground Floor WC

£120,000



**Guild Avenue, Bloxwich**

- Well Presented Semi-Detached
- Two Reception Rooms
- Breakfast Kitchen
- Guest WC
- Detached Garage
- Refitted Bathroom

Offers in Excess Of £110,000



**Glastonbury Crescent, Mossley**

- No Upward Chain
- Garage
- Off Road Parking
- Refitted Kitchen
- Lounge
- Three bedrooms

Offers in Excess Of £109,995



**Somerfield Road, Bloxwich**

- No Upward Chain
- Superb Kitchen/Diner
- Utility Room
- Potential parking to the rear
- Rear Access
- Three Bedrooms

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**Shannon Drive, Brownhills**

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- Lounge
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- Low Maintenance Rear Garden

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- Conservatory
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- Four Bedrooms

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- Parking Area
- Original Period Features Throughout

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- Four Bedrooms
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- Front & Rear Gardens

Offers in Excess of £240,000



**Lichfield Road, Walsall**

- Detached Family Home
- Close to Shire Oak Academy
- Excellent Transport Links to Local Towns
- Extension Potential
- Superb Front & Rear Gardens
- Side Garage

Offers in the Region Of £230,000



**Four Crosses Road, Walsall**

- Very Well Presented Detached Home
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- Dining Room
- Refitted Breakfast Kitchen
- Ground Floor Shower Room
- Garage

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**Green Lane, Walsall**

- Extended Traditional Semi-Detached
- Off Road Parking
- Porch
- Extended Kitchen
- Two Reception Rooms
- High Heath Area

Offers in the Region Of £175,000



**Lord Street, Walsall**

- No Upward Chain
- Queen Mary's & Blue Coat Schools Nearby
- Several Primary Schools locally
- Two Reception Rooms
- Garage
- Kitchen/Diner

£165,000



**Dunnerdale Road, Clayhanger**

- No Upward Chain
- Off Road Parking
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Cul-de-Sac Location
- Fitted Kitchen & Dining Area
- Conservatory

Offers in the Region Of £165,000



**Wilkes Avenue, Bentley**

- Traditional Detached Property
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- Side Garage
- Driveway
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Close to King Charles Primary School

Offers in the Region Of £165,000



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- Superbly Renovated Bungalow
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- Excellent Transport Links
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- Extended
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- Fitted Kitchen/Diner
- Downstairs W.C.
- Utility

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**Coppcie Road, Walsall**

- Spacious Detached Bungalow
- Superb Conservatory
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**Newhome Way, Bloxwich**

- Three Storey Town House
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- Garage
- Off Road Parking
- Kitchen/Diner
- Spacious Lounge with Juliet Balcony

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**Ingledeed Close, Walsall**

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- Off Road Parking
- Garage
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Sought After Location
- Many Reputable Schools Nearby

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**Norton East Road, Cannock**

- No Upward Chain
- Off Road Parking
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Lounge
- Breakfast Kitchen
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- Well Presented Period Style Semi
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- Delightful Rear Garden
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- Breakfast Kitchen

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- Ideal First Purchase
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**Pooles Lane, Willenhall**

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- Off Road Parking
- Attractive Rear Garden
- Refitted Bathroom
- Breakfast Kitchen
- Two Double Bedrooms

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**Yew Tree Road, Shelfield**

- No Upward Chain
- Two Reception Rooms
- Ground Floor WC
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- First Floor Bathroom
- Gas Central Heating

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- Exclusive Development
- Available March 2016
- Available Off Plan
- Close Proximity to Town Centre
- Allocated Parking

Offers in the Region Of £110,000



**Field Road, Walsall**

- Period Style Terrace
- Two Reception Rooms
- Extended Breakfast Kitchen
- Bathroom
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Rear Garden

Offers in the Region Of £94,950



**Lichfield Road, Walsall**

- No Upward Chain
- Desirable Location
- Close to Walsall Town Centre
- Communal Parking
- Delightful Communal Gardens
- Garage

Offers in Excess of £90,000



**Terret Close, Walsall**

- Modern Two Bedroom Apartment
- Located Close to Walsall Town Centre
- Secure Gated Car Park
- Allocated Parking Space
- Secure Communal Entrance
- Lounge with Juliet Balconies

Offers in the Region Of £87,000



**Revival Street, Bloxwich**

- No Upward Chain
- Ideal First Purchase
- Refitted Kitchen
- Wet Room
- Gas Central Heating & Double Glazing
- Delightful Rear Garden

Offers in the Region Of £85,000



**Terret Close, Walsall**

- Modern Two Bedroom Apartment
- Located Close to Walsall Town Centre
- Secure Gated Car Park
- Allocated Parking Space
- Secure Communal Entrance
- Lounge with Two Juliet Balconies

Offers in the Region Of £85,000



**West Street, Leamore**

- Three Bedroom Mid-Terrace
- Two Reception Rooms
- Kitchen
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- Three Double Bedrooms
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**Bealeys Close, Walsall**

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- Lounge with dual aspect windows
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**Buxton Close, Walsall**

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- Three Bedrooms
- Bathroom

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**Dartford Road, Walsall**

- Semi Detached
- Three Bedrooms
- First Floor Bathroom
- Two Reception Rooms
- Fitted Kitchen
- Delightful Front & Rear Gardens
- No Upward Chain

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**Peake Road, Walsall**

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# Joy of six with MG

Six months ago, MG Motor UK launched the new MG6 and it has been a great success with customers enjoying numerous improvements to the value-for-money fastback.

With the range starting from £13,995 and the top specification coming in at £17,995, customers have been really taken with the MG6. To mark the six months, MG spoke to six owners to find out how they're getting on with their MG6 and what they love about it the most.

Kevin Wright bought his MG6 from the Sales Centre in Longbridge. He said: "We owned the previous version of the MG6 and decided to upgrade to the newer model after seeing that MG had made so many great changes to it. We're so happy with the car and find it nice to drive. Plus, the emissions and fuel economy have been made better which is a great added bonus."

Michael Kneeshaw bought his MG6 from Cambridge MG. He said: "This is the second MG6 I've owned, and the fourth MG, and it's a pleasure to drive. We treated ourselves to the top of the range model and it has all the gizmos you could possibly want and need; which makes it great value for money. The design of the car certainly stands out and is identifiable with many people."

Alan Cook also bought his MG6 from Cambridge MG. He said: "It's a fine car and is very comfortable. Compared with the previous MG6, it's definitely improved and the fuel economy has certainly been made better. I've had MGs virtually all my driving life, and this is a great addition to that line up."

Richard Cawte bought his MG6 from Apple MG in Gravesend. He said: "I used to own an MGB and had always wanted another MG. After spotting the MG6 in the paper, I set up a test drive and instantly liked it. The boot space is sufficient enough to hold my golf clubs and the engine has got plenty of go to it without having to put too much into it. I've had a lot of compliments about it and people have said it's great to see the MG back on the road."



Stephen Rainbow-Cross bought his MG6 from Summit Garage in Dudley. He said: "The MG6 is an extremely good car and I'm really pleased with it. It has a lot of power and a lot of toys and, when you look at other manufacturers, similar models just don't match up to the spec available with the MG6."

Daljit Singh bought his MG6 from Coventry MG and has nothing but praise for it: "This car is one of the best I've owned. I fell in love with it straight away and find the driving experience phenomenal. Combine getting so much for your money with the amazing customer service I received and you can see why I can't fault it. You also can't put a price on the quality of British engineering, which makes this car so special."

The iconic British MG brand can trace its history back to 1924 and is world famous for making stylish cars that are fun to drive and own and are sold at remarkably affordable prices. Modern MGs, which are designed, engineered and finally assembled in Longbridge, Birmingham, continue this long and rich MG tradition.

Two cars currently come off the Longbridge as-

sembly lines: the MG6 and the MG3 with several models planned for the immediate and longer-term future.

The MG6 is a medium-sized fastback offering fantastic dynamic handling, high levels of interior comfort and a tremendously spacious cabin area with a cavernous boot. The MG6 won the category '£17,500 and under' in the Caravan Club Tow-car of the Year Awards in 2015. It also won the 2014 Auto Express Driver Power Best Handling Award.

The MG3 is a new generation supermini which brings fun and style to this sector of the market at very affordable prices. The 1.5-litre petrol-powered car can also be personalised, so owners have the option of giving their car their own style-statement.

MG was voted the fourth best manufacturer in the UK in the Auto Express Driver Power Awards in 2015. MG was the fastest growing brand in Britain in 2014 as shown by official figures issued by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders.

Currently MG has the fastest growing network of dealers in the UK as sales continue to surge.

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# CX-5 from Mazda is ticking all the boxes

By John Griffiths

**With more and more cars in the 'compact SUV' area of the market, manufacturers have to offer more to win over drivers.**

Mazda has done just that with its CX-5 as the car, which first appeared three years ago, has undergone a series of significant trim and equipment upgrades.

The designation 'compact' is a bit of a misnomer these days, as Mazda launched its smaller CX-3 earlier this year to compete with the likes of the Renault Captur and Vauxhall Mokka. The CX-5, as you might suspect, is clearly larger and comes with bigger, more powerful engine options.

There are petrol and diesel options, two and four wheel drive and three trim levels to choose from at prices from just over £23,000 to £30,995.

The test car was the top of the range version, with the most powerful engine – the 2.2 litre turbo diesel with 175PS of power, a hefty 420Nm of torque, six-speed manual gearbox, an 'on demand' four wheel drive system and the highest level of trim and equipment. These, of course, are credentials which have earned it two successive 'Tow Car of the Year' awards in its category from the Caravan Club, and a 'Best Winter Car' accolade from the Carbuyer website.

It has large windows contributing to a lighter, even roomier feel to the cabin in spite of the black leather upholstery and the high 'command' driving position which is one of the biggest attractions for SUV enthusiasts.

As the most powerful and torquey version, this CX-5 naturally performs effortlessly (0 to 62mph in 8.8 seconds) with the engine rarely breathing heavily, adding to the smooth, relaxed ambience which puts the range flagship into the luxury end of this market segment.

The four wheel drive system is aimed primarily at traction and safety on the road, rather than off it, so the suspension too is road-orientated: not the long-travel, bumpy set-up of some soft-roaders with Land Rover pretensions.

Not that the system wouldn't cope with the odd foray onto wet grass or muddy tracks, though, when towing a caravan or trailer off a camp site.

It's all automatic – no extra buttons or levers. In normal road conditions 100 per cent of the torque goes through the front wheels but if they start to lose traction, anything up to 50 per cent is transferred to the rear wheels virtually instantly. It has the advantages of a more traditional 4WD system but it's lighter with less drag in normal driving, thus saving fuel. And that's what it's all about in this sector: many of the advantages of a full-blown SUV but for less money and with lower fuel and tax costs.

## Economy

The CX-5 has been widely acclaimed for its real-world economy, with an official average of more than 54mpg and a CO2 rating of 136g/km.

It's a prime example of Mazda's 'SKYACTIV' technology which is now the central component of all its cars: features such as increased engine efficiency and the use of new materials in the chassis which are both stronger and lighter. It was the company's first model to demonstrate this new way of building cars.

The CX-5 seats five adults with a big boot – 503 litres – which expands to 1,620 if you fold the rear seats down. It's more in the family saloon area than the 'hatchback on steroids' of many in the compact sector.

The front leather seats are electrically adjustable to suit a wide range of driving positions and electrically heated, too. You get a Bose premium sound system and, of course, climate control to help keep you comfortable.

This year's improvements include the latest multimedia commander, based around a seven-inch touch screen for the new satnav (on higher grade models such as the test car) plus audio and infotainment systems, with USB and smartphone connectivity. These functions are also controllable from remote buttons on the multifunction steering wheel.

LED daytime running lights and fog lamps and 19-inch gunmetal alloys are among the exterior upgrades for 2015.

The £29,395 test car was also fitted with the optional (for £800) safety pack which includes adaptive headlights, blind spot monitoring, lane departure warning and rear 'cross traffic alert'.

Other options in the range include two and four wheel drive versions, automatic transmission and two other engine choices – a 2.0 litre, 165PS petrol and a 2.0 litre, 150PS diesel. Insurance groups range from 15E to 21E.

As well as winning awards from industry pundits, the CX-5 has been a big hit with car buyers, too – even though it was Mazda's first entry into the burgeoning compact SUV segment it passed the one million mark in a little over three years, making it one of its quickest sellers ever.

That shouldn't be a surprise as it ticks all the boxes. It has the qualities of a well-appointed family saloon with the added extras of all-weather security, great visibility and obvious attractions for the towing set.



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MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Picture for illustration only.

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# Versatility and space make Jazz big winner

By John Griffiths

Honda's baby is growing up – in more ways than one – with a new Jazz which has blossomed into one of the biggest and most versatile hatchbacks in its class.

It may be Honda's smallest car, but the all-new Jazz's interior offers the sort of space which puts some family saloons to shame, particularly if you happen to be a six-footer confined to the rear seats.

It's all down to clever packaging, as the new car is a sleeker, more aerodynamic shape and less than four inches longer than its predecessor. Higher quality materials, new technology and a more refined ride convey the feeling that this third generation car has grown up in other ways, too.

Prices range from £13,495 to £17,425 but perhaps the limiting factor is that there is only one engine option, a 1,300cc, 102bhp petrol unit.

It does come, though, with the option of a manual gearbox or a continuously variable transmission auto, which is actually more economical – enough to promise tax as well as fuel savings.

Although the engine choice was obviously made long before the controversy about diesel emissions hit the headlines, it will be interesting to see if that has any impact on Jazz sales. But maybe Honda thought that a family-sized hatchback offering average petrol usage of between 55 and 61mpg was incentive enough in this market.

The new Jazz looks sleeker, more sporty, with sculpted side panels and a bolder new front end with echoes of the larger Civic. But it's on the inside where it scores, with the use of higher grade materials, new technology on higher grade models, new seats, and, of course, the amount of extra room created in the redesign. The top of the range test car with its clear instruments and trim which combined touches of leather, chrome and high glass plastic had a more expensive feel than its actual price tag.

Its 0 to 62mph acceleration time is reasonably nifty at 11.2 seconds (a fraction longer with the CVT transmission) but even when pushed hard between gears the engine remains sewing machine smooth.

## Refined

Perhaps more significant is that sixth gear is almost an overdrive, so that during motorway cruising it's particularly refined for a small car: you're more likely to be aware of the gentle hiss of the large wing mirrors disrupting the airflow than of anything mechanical.

The new chassis and body are light but particularly stiff, which contributes to the low noise levels but also means the Jazz is light and responsive to steering input. Its suspension is tuned for a supple ride yet it resists the tendency to rock 'n' roll through corners, an essential in terms of ride comfort.

The rear doors are large, for easy access, and once inside even a six-footer will have head and leg room to spare.

The Jazz has Honda's trademark 'magic seat' system which means the rear seats are multi-adjustable (and can even be reclined) to juggle between the demands of cargo and passengers. It has a generous 354 litres of boot space, rising to 884 if the rear seats are folded down.

The test car was a top of the range EX Nav specification, which comes in at £16,325. With its manual transmission its official fuel average is 55.4mpg with a CO2 rating of 120g/km. But if you pay an extra £11,000 for the CVT version, you actually get a couple of extra miles per gallon and a lower CO2 rating of 114g/km, according to the official test figures.

The cleanest and greenest Jazz in the range is the entry level S model with the CVT system at £14,59, with 61.4mpg and 108g/km, which also brings it down one VED tax band (from C to B).

This base model comes with a CD/stereo with Bluetooth and remote controls on the steering wheel, electric windows, automatic lights and wipers, stop/start system and Honda's 'magic seats', (those in the rear can recline, too). Safety features such as front, side and curtain airbags, stability assist, hill start assist, city brake and electronic brake force distribution are standard across the range.

Higher up the range features such as electrically heated and adjustable mirrors, alloy wheels, parking sensors, and the Honda Connect infotainment and connectivity system, controlled by a centrally mounted seven-inch touchscreen, are added. The EX gets a rear view camera, automatic air conditioning, rear privacy glass, leather steering wheel and electric windows all round. SatNav is available on SE and EX 'Navi' versions.

For me the new Jazz is a winner in the space race, yet with only a minimal increase in exterior size it's no more difficult to handle around town or to park.

It may only have one engine option, but it's one that can rival many smaller, one-litre city cars for economy and tax efficiency so it's unlikely to harm the Jazz's heritage as one of Honda's most popular models.



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## Jordan's late goals take Pics into next round

**Rushall 3 Newcastle Town 1**  
TWO late goals from Jordan Fitzpatrick gave Rushall an eventual safe passage through to the next round of the Staffordshire Senior Cup as they beat Newcastle Town.

Rushall gained the initiative in the opening stages with Alex Reid dragging his shot wide and Nick Wright going close only to be denied by Ben Mills, who headed his shot off the line.

Pics went even closer when Wright chipped a ball to the back post where Luke Benbow, back from suspension, volleyed into the ground with the ball clipping the bar as it went over.

Jack Duggan forced a good save from Adam Alcock in the Newcastle Town goal before Benbow curled just wide from 18 yards.

The visitors should have taken the lead when Jordan Cole picked up the ball in space 15 yards out but, luckily for Rushall, put his shot wide. The miss looked costly as Wright slotted in a rebound after Alcock had saved from Reid's volley in the 31st minute to give Rushall the lead.

However, less than 60 seconds later, Newcastle were level when Cole teed up Michael Lennon 20 yards out and he dispatched a volley into the far corner to restore parity. Jonathan Brown saved well from Dereece Gardner in the second half as Newcastle gained the upper hand as the game looked to be heading towards extra-time.

However, 88 minutes in, Fitzpatrick picked up the ball on the edge and sent a curling, left-footed effort into the top corner to give Rushall the lead and then in stoppage time to put a gloss on the scoreline.

## Prince and the Swan have a show of fours

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Cannock Town 0 Burntwood Dragons 5; Chasetown Sch.Reds 1 Barton United 3; Four Oaks Lions 6 W'ton Sporting 0; Pelsall Villa Colts UHU 4 Pelsall Villa Colts 3; Red Star FC 3 Chasetown Sch.Blues 2  
**Staffs Sunday Challenge Cup - Round Two**  
AFC Queens 3 Belt Road 4 (aet); Chase Spartans 0 Pelsall Villa Colts Vets 1; Dr Johnson 7 Wheatheaf FC 2; Woolpack United 1 ASP Victoria 2  
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AFC Saddlers Arms 4 AFC Cat 0; Bear & Pheasant 1 Wychniew FC 4  
**Bowling Green FC 5 Owlett Johnson 1 (aet);**  
Eximus Warriors 4 Cannock Rangers 3; Seighford "B" 1 Scales FC 8; Three Crowns United 2 AFC Pegasus 4; Walsall Wheatheaf 0 Trent Valley Flyers 3; Warstone Wanderers 3 Bowman FC 0

## Darlow stretch unbeaten run to five games

**Darlaston 4 Wrens Nest 1**  
DARLASTON are now unbeaten in five games thanks to a 4-1 West Midlands Division One home win over local neighbours Wrens Nest.

Mark Swann's netted his eighth goal of the season as the hosts broke the deadlock on 32 minutes.

Ryan McAllister was next to put one into the back of the net.

The two goal advance was short lived when Wrens Nest's Todd Warner beat Collins on the stroke of half time.

Darlaston took control of the game following their third goal on 61 minutes when Leon Taylor found the target.

Tyrone Atkinson added his name to the team sheet on 80 minutes when Taylor's shot was parried and he followed up to slot home.

# By George, debutant hits the spot

**Barnsley 0 Walsall 2**  
A debut goal from George Evans and a Milan Lalkovic strike saw Walsall get back to winning ways with a 2-0 victory at Barnsley.

Evans capped a hugely promising display with low drive just past the hour mark.

Former Barnsley man Lalkovic then doubled the Saddlers advantage with 20 minutes remaining.

Boss Smith was forced into making a raft of changes for the trip to Oakwell with Neil Etheridge, Andy Taylor and Sam Mantom all ruled out after picking up injuries in the defeat to Chesterfield.

James O'Connor also wasn't fit enough to make the journey with youngster George Evans thrown

straight into the starting XI after completing his loan switch from Manchester City.

There were also recalls for Craig MacGillivray, Milan Lalkovic and Anthony Forde as Smith plumped for a 4-1-4-1 formation. For Barnsley, Wolverhampton-born Sam Winnall started up front.

Despite having lost their last four games, Barnsley came flying out of the traps and almost took the lead inside two minutes.

Simeon Jackson's pass took a deflection off Adam Chambers and fell kindly for Winnall but, leaning backwards, the former Wolves man scuffed wide from 14-yards.

The Saddlers knocked the ball around neatly in

the opening 15 minutes with talisman Romaine Sawyers particularly seeing a lot of the ball.

But a comfortably saved 25-yard strike from debutant Evans was the closest they came to breaking the deadlock.

The Manchester City youngster seemed keen to make his mark and he went close again with another fizzed effort from distance which sailed just past the post.

Walsall's last win at Oakwell had come in 1971 but they took the lead with a debut goal from Evans. A wonderful ball from Sawyers found Lalkovic and the former Chelsea man showed bundles of composure to take the ball into the box and slip it past Townsend.

# Khalsa's cup run is brought to an end

**Sporting Khalsa 1 FC United of Manchester 3**  
**SPORTING Khalsa's incredible FA Cup run was sadly brought to an end by FC United of Manchester in front of an impressive crowd.**

It was a fantastic occasion, with a record attendance of 2,252 on hand at the Aspray Arena to witness the drama after Khalsa had been preparing for all week.

But Khalsa fell to a 3-1 defeat, with United substitute Chris Lindfield scoring the decisive goal in the final 10 minutes of the game and putting end to the home side's dream.

Despite the pouring rain, the fans' spirits were not dampened with a great show of support as they turned out in number to cheer on both sides.

However, the occasion could easily have turned ugly prior to kick-off when supporters clashed in the corner of the ground, with a flare being thrown on the pitch as the players warmed up.

Thankfully the Kick-off was unaffected and in the early exchanges both teams looked to have a good structure at the back, with no chances worthy of note at either end.

Fans were making the presence felt throughout and unfortunately play was stopped on 22 minutes when another flare was thrown onto the pitch.

Upon the restart, United's Sam Madeley found space in the box only to be denied by Khalsa keeper James Pemberton.

### Breakthrough

But minutes later, United made the breakthrough when Luke Ashworth found himself unmarked in the box to head home from a corner.

Khalsa responded well, with Marvin Nesbitt twice denied only by superb blocks.

After those efforts though, United doubled their lead when Greg Daniels latched onto a long pass over the top of the defence before lobbing the ball over Pemberton.

There was little to separate the sides in the first period – but the two lapses in concentration proved costly for the home side.

The second period started relatively quietly, and both sides were quick to make changes. United's Matthew Wolfenden came on for Madeley while Michael Nelson and Brad Lawley replaced Lee Wherton and Dave Meese for Sporting Khalsa.

And just after the hour mark, Khalsa lifted the home support when centre-back Tesfa Robinson poked the ball home from a Craig Bannister



**Khalsa's Mike Perks in action during the cup qualifier at Noose Lane, Willenhall**

cross. The goal was just what the game needed, and a rejuvenated Khalsa went close to an equaliser through Robinson.

They also had a huge penalty shout when United defender Ashworth appeared to handle the ball in his own box, but the pleas went unanswered.

As Khalsa made a desperate push forward for an equaliser, United hit them on the break and substitute Lindfield fired the ball low into the net to seal a place

for them in tonight's draw for the first round. Ian Rowe's men went close, but ultimately were beaten by an FC United side who were clinical in front of goal and were able to keep a grip on the game and it's they who will go on to the next round.

Despite the result, it was a truly great day and certainly the biggest in Sporting Khalsa's history. It gave the team great exposure and an it was an occasion they will remember for years to come.

## Evans gets a perfect start with Smith's side

MIDFIELDER George Evans has described his whirlwind 24 hours after signing for Walsall – and then going on to score in the Saddlers win over Barnsley.

The Manchester City youngster joined the Saddlers on a one-month loan deal last week before stepping straight on to the team bus for the trip to Oakwell and he went on to make a good showing adding to the score and helping Walsall back to winning ways.

The opportunity for the new boy to play came with Sam Mantom out injured, the 20-year-old was handed a starting spot and immediately repaid boss Dean Smith's faith with the opening goal in the 2-0 away win.

And Evans, who had been speaking to former Saddler Jordy Hiwula before joining, admitted his start to life at the Banks's couldn't have gone any better.

"The first 24 hours were great and very exciting," he said.

"I got to training with Manchester City on Monday and they told me a phone call had come in from Walsall.

"I rang Jordy straight away and he had nothing but good words to say," added Evans.

"He said it's a fantastic club, a close-knit club and they play really good football.

"Hearing things like that made it even easier to come," said the new signing.

"I came down on Tuesday morning, met the lads and spoke with Dean and he said I was going to play.

"I was delighted."  
Evans got on the scoreboard alongside Milan Lalkovic who put the second in for the Saddlers.

## Bloxwich add more points to their tally

**Wolverhampton 0 Bloxwich 3**  
IN torrential conditions, Bloxwich Men's First XI faced a Wolverhampton team without a win and who recently have been looking low on form.

Bloxwich on the other hand have started the season excellently and were looking to add more points to their ever-growing tally.

The visitors started well with Gary Williams scoring another goal from midfield and Phil Ashcroft adding another soon after.

Debutant James Foster made an impressive start to his Bloxwich career with Jake Perkins getting his first goal of the season with a great finish from a fantastic cross from Bloxwich's international signing Nathan Scaccia.

The defence were never really threatened in a very one sided game.

Bloxwich should expect a far tougher contest against top of the league Market Drayton this week and will train hard in preparation for the Showdown at Sneyd.

## Tale of two towns ends in derby draw

**Tipton Town 1 Willenhall Town 1**  
TIPTON Town and Willenhall Town shared the spoils in a keenly-fought derby which was reminiscent of clashes down the years between the two sides.

Home substitute Robbie Duffield and the Lockmen's Ryan Ward were dismissed late on.

New Tipton keeper Sandip Bains saved Eddie Wilson's penalty and Matt Dorgan's follow-up.

Willenhall later had another chance from the spot, ex-Red Tom Rann dismissed for handling on the line, but Ward fired wide.

Alex Carlin struck two minutes from time for Willenhall, but Tipton salvaged a West Midlands Premier point in stoppage time when substitute Gurtej Singh-Dosangh put one in the back of the net.



# Sport

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## Win swaps Blues with Hull in table

Hull 2 Blues 0

HULL replaced Blues in second place in the Championship as Steve Bruce's side continued their unbeaten home run.

David Meyler's second goal in as many games and Abel Hernandez's seventh of the season earned the home side the three points.

The goals came in the space of two first-half minutes, Meyler finishing after patient build-up and Hernandez continuing his run of scoring from close range.

Birmingham had set up to defend in depth with Jonathan Spector sitting in front of the defence and Hull were making them work hard early on.

The visitors used pace in attack and were the first to threaten as Allan McGregor had to save with his feet after Jacques Maghoma had shot straight at him from a low cross by Paul Caddis.

Tomasz Kuszczak saved one-handed from a volley by Sam Clucas, who met Moses Odubajo's far-post cross with a fine finish as the visitors continued to soak up pressure.

Maghoma again tested McGregor with a low shot after making space in the area for his shot as Birmingham looked more of a threat in attack.

However, the visitors were conceding ground and were nearly punished when a low cross to the far post was pushed just wide by Ahmed Elmohamady.

Birmingham were then punished for giving up possession as Meyler opened the scoring after 36 minutes.

Elmohamady passed low from the right side of the area and Meyler steered his shot in off the post.

Just two minutes later the home side went further ahead when Andy Robertson beat two defenders down the left and fed Hernandez, who shot home.

## Benbow brings it home for the Pics with double strike

Rushall 2 Colwyn Bay 1

TWO goals from Luke Benbow helped Rushall come from behind to beat Colwyn Bay.

Dean Coleman saved well from a powerful Lloyd Ellams effort before Benbow just couldn't stretch enough at the other end to convert Massiah McDonald's cross.

Benbow went closer when his shot across Louis Gray brought a good save from the keeper and the striker hit the post from the same position from the resultant corner.

But Colwyn Bay scored when skipper Robbie Booth burst through a gap in the Pics defence after 35 minutes and curled his effort home from the edge of the box.

Rushall made a change on 57 minutes, Ethan Delaney coming on for Ryan Edmunds and making an instant impact a minute later when he flicked on for Benbow to slot his shot underneath Gray.

The home side won the game in the final minute when McDonald sent a quick throw into Benbow's feet and he fired into the far corner from just inside the box to win the Evo-Stik Northern Premier points.

## Walsall grab first league victory

Silhillians 5 Walsall 16

WALSALL finally secured their first league win of the season with what was, a fairly comfortable victory at Solihull.

Winger John Josh Williams and flanker Reece Bennett had both made defence-breaking runs. But they were not capitalised upon.

The pressure Walsall created resulted in the hosts conceding penalties. Jack Crowhurst converted two to give his team a 6-0 interval lead.

The second half followed a similar pattern with Walsall continuing to defend well. But also their forwards began to increase their dominance and

Rugby

started to set up good attacking positions.

It was an impressive forward drive that set up Walsall's first try. Simon Weaver, Liam Taylor, Michael Benson and Carl Robinson had made good ball carries before flanker Andy Fitzgerald made the final burst to cross for the score.

The visitors had a couple of penalty chances before the hosts struck back.

The ball seemed to have been spilled in mid-field before replacement Hibbard went over after a lineout. They soon secured the crucial score as

centre Richard Clarke's burst was well supported by Jeffrey Williamson, Reece Bennett and the rest of the forwards.

Scrum half, Connor Pitt reacted well at the breakdown and put in a well-placed kick. Winger Jordan Lay harassed the defence before full back Crowhurst pounced on the ball to score the try that would seal the victory.

There was an excellent win for the United who beat Sutton Coldfield 2nds 31-14.

Tongan Palu Holio proved to be a very effective centre and scored two tries.

Walsall 3rds lost 29-12 to Burntwood 2nds with Mario Tamilio and Alex Hazeldene scoring.

## Chambers marks his 200th game

SKIPPER Adam Chambers was keen to focus on the positives following Walsall's thrilling four-all draw at Colchester.

The 34-year-old marked his 200th game for the Saddlers by claiming two assists in the entertaining encounter at the Weston Homes Community Stadium.

Romaine Sawyers, Milan Lalkovic, George Evans and James O'Connor were the men on target for Dean Smith's side in Essex.

Yet the Saddlers, who before kick-off had conceded just twice in seven away games, also saw their net breached four times in a fixture that saw both teams take the lead.

"At half-time we were 2-0 up but we weren't at our best," Chambers said. "They had a few chances and in the second half they came out and got a goal and from then on it was end-to-end. It could have been 10-all."

"But you have to look at the positives. We came back to win a point with a goal in stoppage time."

"Then we nearly nicked it at the end with Kieron Morris' shot that hit the bar."

"We have got great character and spirit in the team and we showed that."

"The lads all get on and we are pushing to win every game. We never feel like we are out of it." We looked a threat every time we went forward and scoring four goals away from home is a big achievement."

Despite the good elements of their play, Chambers believes the side needs to do better defensively when Gillingham visit the Banks's on Saturday.

"We have been really tight defensively, but Colchester put us under a lot of pressure," he said.

## Good Evans! He's top notch, says Dean

BOSS Dean Smith hailed 'top notch' debutant George Evans as Walsall maintained their unbeaten away record in League One with victory at Barnsley.

Goals from Evans and ex-Tyke Milan Lalkovic wrapped up an impressive 2-0 victory at Oakwell.

The result means Saddlers have won five and drawn two from their seven away fixtures in League One.

And Smith is delighted with the record. "It's a great record and the players deserve it because they have been excellent," he said.

"I thought George looked top notch," the manager said. "He is a really good footballer and is someone we have been keeping tabs on for a while."

# TEAMS PUT ON GR-EIGHT SHOW

Colchester 4 Walsall 4

**EIGHT different goalscorers. A hugely-entertaining game of football. And probably a fair result.**

If there was ever a match good enough to be an advert for League One football, this was it.

Attacking brilliance, kamikaze defending and a controversial refereeing decision that impacted the result - Walsall's trip to the Weston Homes Community Stadium had it all.

Both sets of managers will have come away from this one wondering how they didn't win or lose the game in equal measure.

These are two sides that have a huge amount in common.

Both managers made their way into their respective dugouts after impressing while in charge of the youth team.

And both have now built sides that are fluent and full of energy but also have that touch of experience that is so crucial at this level.

Expertise

For Walsall, that expertise comes in the shape of James O'Connor and Adam Chambers, who kept their team in the game during the opening 10 minutes.

Colchester, buoyed by their midweek win over Port Vale, made a breathtaking start with O'Connor and Chambers both making vital interceptions in a spell that also saw new-boy George Evans head off the line.

The Saddlers had conceded just two goals away from home all season, prior to kick-off.

But despite O'Connor and Chambers often being in the right place at the right time, the defending here was a lot more last-ditch than Walsall fans have become used to.

Those troubles were largely forgotten though when a well-taken Romaine Sawyers goal and a deflected Milan Lalkovic strike gave Smith's side a two-goal lead at the break.

Yet you always got the feeling this one still had a long way to go, even if Colchester have the worst defensive record in the Football League.

And so it proved with George Moncur and Marvin Sordell scoring two goals in three min-



Jason Demetriou collides with Marvin Sordell during the match at Colchester

utes to level the tie. Both those goals originated with balls coming in from Darren Ambrose on the right.

The Saddlers though responded in the right way and showed bundles of character to re-take the lead at 3-2 through loanee George Evans.

Yet, when they fell 4-3 behind, it was another right-sided cross that proved to be their undoing.

That will be something Smith looks at in the coming days with Andy Taylor and Craig MacGillivray probably feeling they could have done better with deliveries from that side.

However, it was in the build-up to Colchester's fourth goal that Smith believed his side should

have had a penalty. Tom Bradshaw's overhead kick struck the arm of Tom Eastman and, while it would have been difficult for the defender to get his hand out of the way, it was one of those decisions that all football fans will have seen given.

Walsall's spirit again shone through with O'Connor levelling in stoppage time and Kieron Morris almost snatching the points when he rattled the crossbar.

The result meant Walsall maintained their unbeaten away record in League One.

The team showed they will continue to spread goals around with four different players on target - one of which wasn't Tom Bradshaw.

★ ★ ★

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